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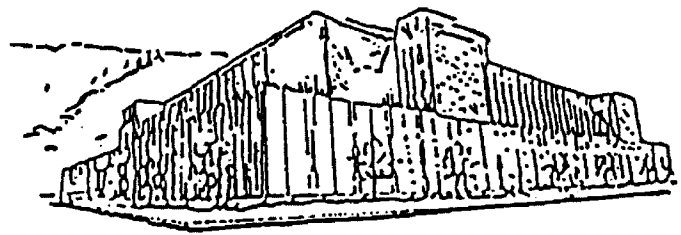
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FALSE POPULISM:
A PROFILE OF WISE USE ACTIVITY IN MONTANA

by

Robert Marshall Perks

A.B. The College of William & Mary in Virginia, 1992

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement

for the degree of

Master of Sciences

The University of Montana

1996

Approved by:



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False Populism: A Profile of Wise Use Activity in Montana (98 pp.)

Director: Bill Chaloupka



By characterizing regulations as a principle cause of job loss and economic dislocation and promoting grassroots activism as the only defense against economic collapse and government tyranny, Wise Use organizers have spawned anti-environmental citizens groups in many communities throughout the United States. People for the West! is one such Wise Use organization whose political organizing activities pose a direct threat to the environmental health of the state of Montana. This group has been somewhat successful in dominating natural resource policy issues with an industry agenda, and in building strong political power at the local, state and regional levels.

Its supporters claim that People for the West! and other industry groups were originated and are directed by average Americans whose livelihood and lifestyle are somehow adversely affected by environmental regulations. Their pro-development, anti-environment campaigns are waged, they contend, for the purpose of protecting these affected citizens. What is alarming is that a significant segment of the American population believes this rhetoric and has seemingly chosen to accept Wise Use philosophy as the possible answer to economic problems.

Much like the extractive practices of the corporations that finance them, Wise Use activities are leaving deep scars on western communities. By directing people's economic insecurity into anger at an identifiable, if contrived, enemy -- *environmentalism* -- the movement has deeply polarized communities, setting citizens at war with themselves and with government. Environmentalists insist that battles fought over such false dichotomies as "jobs versus the environment" distract individuals and communities from the true threats to economic and environmental health -- irresponsible corporate practices and the public policies that sanction them.

As the Wise Use Movement grows in strength and breadth, even more is at stake than environmental protections, economic stability, and public health. The movement is building a base of support for a range of conservative issues, and the infusion of activists into the political arena is having a profound effect on elected governmental bodies throughout the West, with dire implications for many communities. By tapping into the deep pockets of industries which have an economic stake in the success of the specific causes, groups like People for the West! have quickly evolved into a potent political force. Environmental activists need to develop new strategies to counter this eco-backlash.

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I would also like to take this opportunity to express my great appreciation to the many activists working alone or on behalf of non-profit organizations on the "front lines" of the fight to safeguard Montana from the selfish onslaught of those who would exploit her precious natural resources for profit. Their selfless commitment to natural resources issues and concomitant dedication to the cause of environmental protection, in the face of hostile opposition and, at times, widespread public apathy, is beyond commendable. Indeed, without the benefit of individuals such as Pam Egan, legislative director for the Montana State AFL-CIO, who offered her firsthand experience and willingly shared information, this report would not have been possible.

I am grateful as well to my family and friends for their acceptance of and interest in my passion. Without a doubt -- and often without their consent -- I talked them nearly to death about this particular topic, and have, on quite a few occasions, exhausted them with my perspective on environmental issues in general. Thanks for listening, ya'll.

Finally, I owe special thanks to my wife, Karen. In addition to her faith in my abilities and her amazing patience, she gave me the unbridled support and unconditional love necessary to venture out West to pursue my dreams. For that I am eternally grateful. To have her share my life I am tremendously blessed.

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INTRODUCTION

It is the summer of 1994 and U.S. Senator Max Baucus has traveled to Ronan, Montana to attend a public hearing on the Endangered Species Act which has recently come up for reauthorization in Congress. He addresses a large crowd of people attending a rally outside the meeting site, explaining that the purpose of the hearing is to provide a forum for citizens to become educated about the law and to involve themselves in the legislative process.

Dark clouds of citizen revolt descend upon the event. The 1,000 or so people at the rally are angry and upset about the controversial law, and many rudely interrupt the senator with shouts and obscenities. Ignoring his repeated pleas for them to calm down so that a reasonable discussion can occur, the participants begin chanting loudly, "Stop the war on the West!" Drowned out by the protest, Senator Baucus eventually gives up on the futile attempt to engage the hostile gathering and retreats back inside the building.

Could it be that, frustrated by the failure of the Endangered Species Act to accomplish its designated purpose, conservation-minded citizens had shown up en masse to complain to their elected representative? Finally fed up with the government's inability or unwillingness to carry out its mission to preserve the nation's ecological integrity, had local and statewide citizens' groups and activists organized the spectacle in order to urge Baucus to step up efforts to strengthen the act and other environmental laws? Sadly, this was not the case.

The event in question was sponsored by a well-organized, active "citizens"

organization known as People for the West! (PFW!). The group staged a parade and the rally to publicly denounce the Endangered Species Act. Outraged at what many of the featured speakers referred to as a federal government-sponsored “war on the West,” People for the West! organized against the act because of its alleged unfairness to “common, decent folks” who, they argued, were prevented by the law from protecting their property rights and earning a living.

Several individuals delivered firsthand testimony about how the ESA’s protection of endangered species resulted in severe economic hardship when their livestock were killed by wolves or grizzly bears. Some complained about excessive regulations that restricted development on their land by requiring habitat protection for certain species. Many in the crowd wore yellow arm bands to signify their solidarity for multiple use management and against environmental laws. Some waved signs and banners carrying pointed messages: “Put People First,” “Hooves, Not Wolves,” “Protect Humans, Not Animals,” “Montana Is Not A Zoo,” “Families -- the REAL Endangered Species.”

The theme of the event was obvious: environmental laws excessively harm individuals’ economic prosperity. The overall effectiveness of the staged event may be uncertain, but one fact is clear: a powerful political force has propelled itself headlong into the public debate regarding the management of the nation’s natural resources. And environmentalists are deeply troubled by its effectiveness.

This report presents an overview of the origin, motivations, and influence of People for the West!, a leading anti-environmental “grassroots” organization. The group is profiled in order to assess the impact of its campaign activities on the political,

economic, and environmental health of Montana. The following aspects are analyzed:

- *historical background of the Wise Use Movement*
- *policy objectives of the movement*
- *connection between Wise Use and People for the West!*
- *methods and strategies employed to further the Wise Use agenda*
- *recommendations for responding to the movement*

The information contained in this document is intended to aid individual activists and grassroots environmental groups in countering Wise Use activities that aim to weaken natural resource protections in the state and in the region. This report should prove particularly useful to citizen advocates who find themselves confronting formidable opposition in the environmental arena, especially if they suspect that well-healed economic interests are using deceptive and distorting tactics to fight their genuine grassroots foes.

PART I. Background

Politics and the Traditions of the West

Extremist environmentalism is a threat spearheaded by a few prominent groups to the detriment of energy development and economic prosperity.

- U.S. Representative Joe Skeen (R-NM)

Since the awakening of public awareness to the nation's serious environmental problems in the 1960s, and the subsequent era of federal legislative reforms to address many of these concerns, great strides have been made to improve environmental quality in the United States. In the last decade or so, however, a small but influential segment of the public has become increasingly frustrated with the restrictiveness of some of these measures.

While government regulations may be anathema to many people, this is especially true in the West.¹ Although federal subsidies for commodity development have long supported western economies, a long-standing distrust of federal regulation adds to concern over losing jobs if the government prohibits economic activity on public lands. Resource-based industries -- mining, timber, grazing and others -- are not particularly interested in fostering the transition toward an economy based on recreation, tourism and the sustained extraction of natural resources. A perpetual supply of commodities is an attractive idea to many in these industries, but they are usually reluctant to accept a reduction in production volume, even if the alternative is exhausting the resource base at some future date.

Short-term economic self-interest explains why some people in resource

extraction generally oppose efforts to prevent the development of some remaining portions of the natural environment, such as wilderness areas. This may be the reason that many have become active in corporate-sponsored commodity development interest groups that have sprung up recently to organize against environmental measures.

The demographic make-up of the West has changed. Full-time loggers, miners and ranchers no longer represent anywhere near the majority of residents and their numbers are being reduced by further economic transition of the area. While still significant in some isolated communities, where excise taxes on gas, oil and minerals provide the bulk of local government revenues and education budgets, traditional commodity production is dying a slow death as an industry in the West. For instance, the number of people employed in the extractive industries dropped from one of every three workers in 1969 to one of every six by 1989, and continues to fall.² The percentage of annual income attributable to extractive industries also dropped from 23 percent to 12 percent.³ Economic sectors dependent on the region's natural amenities more than made up for this decline, yielding a steady increase in overall jobs and income.⁴

Contrary to economic reality, commodity interests rely on the widely held belief that resource extraction is the economic mainstay of the region. As a result, influence with state political representatives outweighs the contribution of extractive industries to the regional economy. A major reason for this fact is that extractive industries can provide campaign funds and mobilize a large following at election time. Accordingly, the greatest opposition to proposals that would foster environmental protection or inhibit

resource development usually come out of western state legislatures and congressional delegations.

Considering the history and economic situation of the West, as well as changing political dynamics in recent years, it is not surprising that the Wise Use Movement has found a “home on the range.” With a movement as broad and as active as Wise Use, it would be impossible to include all the essential information in such a limited forum. What follows is a brief overview of the history, breadth and scope of the national movement and its general implications for the environmental movement.

The Wise Use Movement

We intend to destroy the environmental movement once and for all by offering a better alternative, the Wise Use movement. We think that people really want man and nature to live together in productive harmony, and not to be subservient to nature or somebody's idea of nature.

- Alan Gottlieb, CDFE

In August 1988, the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise (CDFE)⁵ sponsored a conference in Nevada. There, major industry representatives, sympathetic organizations and local activists met to discuss their mutual concerns.⁶ Essentially, they were fed up with the constraints of existing environmental laws in the United States. The conference resulted in the creation of a national campaign -- the Wise Use Movement -- to counter regulations designed to protect the nation's natural resources.

Although the participants differed in their specific focuses, they agreed upon some basic principles. First, they would work through the corporate infrastructure; second, they would consider themselves the “new environmentalists”; and third, they would

advocate the need for a middle road, or “wise use” of natural resources. The term “wise use” was co-opted from Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the Forest Service, who advocated the wise use of natural resources, believing they should be carefully utilized to meet people’s needs. Ron Arnold, one of the movement’s leading proponents, admitted that the title was chosen because it seemed catchy enough to have marketing potential.⁷

This conference proved to be the start of an incredibly successful membership drive that propelled the Wise Use Movement to its status as one of the major concerns of the environmental community. Although the growing movement has become national in scope and influence, the West is both the crucible and the cradle for the movement. The loose-knit coalition, encompassing a wide range of groups that fall under the rubric of Wise Use, has garnered the support of landowners, farmers, ranchers, loggers and off-road-vehicle users to name a few.

Policy Objectives of the Wise Use Agenda

Our goal is to destroy, to eradicate the environmental movement. We want to be able to exploit the environment for private gain, absolutely. And we want people to understand that this is a noble goal.

- Ron Arnold, CDFE

As a follow-up to the First Annual Wise Use Conference, Alan Gottlieb of CDFE published a book, *The Wise Use Agenda*,⁸ which delineates twenty-five goals for the movement (See Appendix A). The specific objectives contained in this manifesto call for no new environmental regulations, and the weakening of those currently in place. From the agenda can be derived the two basic tenets that serve as the driving force and uniting theme for the Wise Use campaign. The movement holds that:⁹

- *All constraints on the use of private property should be removed*, including limits set for health, safety and environmental protection; and
- *Access to public lands should be unrestricted* for logging, mining, grazing, drilling, motorized recreation and all commercial enterprise.¹⁰

This anti-environment movement is not about differing conservation philosophies or politics, but about basic economic interests. Wise Use advocates assert that nature should be used for human consumption and profit.¹¹ The movement represents a backlash against a government that many feel is trampling their rights by threatening their livelihood. Led by special interest business and industry-funded groups, the purpose of the campaign is to overturn and weaken environmental regulations, and open up public and private lands to development.

The movement has gained a strong foothold in many small towns across rural America. Regardless of complex economic realities, the simple argument that environmental protections are undermining the economy is appealing, particularly to unemployed workers in dying communities that rely upon industries such as mining and timber as means for survival. For people in desperate circumstances, unable to attain the American dream, Wise Use has provided an identifiable enemy, *environmentalism*, on which to focus their anger and vent their rage.

The Land Use Conflict

The people are fighting mad...They're saying, "Don't destroy our way of life, don't destroy the West." Western Congressman rightly echo the battle cry, proclaiming their stance against this war on the West.

- Bill Grannell, People for the West!

The conflict over land use in the United States, embodied in Wise Use philosophy, is part

of a long-standing controversy over land control and ownership. The ongoing friction has been characterized by intense political manipulation, most notably, by mining, grazing and timber interests to gain access to vast tracks of public lands and other natural resources in the West. Sparked by the implementation of stricter land use regulations, these special interests have heretofore been relatively unsuccessful due to a lack of popular support. With the recent development of the Wise Use Movement, they have been able to gain some ground.

The evolving land use conflict was borne out of a western ideology of independence and political autonomy. In this sense, the Wise Use Movement is not a new phenomenon; it is simply the most recent chapter in an ongoing debate over public and private land use policy. During the Sagebrush Rebellion¹² of the late 1970s, for instance, development interests used the unifying theme of removal of federal control of public lands via privatization and other means. This movement eventually petered out due to a lack of public backing and its own internal inconsistencies.¹³ Drawing strength from some of the same leaders, sentiment, and strategy as the Sagebrush Rebellion, the Wise Use Movement represents a continuation of the land use battle in a slightly different form. The movement involves a much broader coalition of ideological and economic interests that stand to profit from the deregulation of industry and the dismantling of environmental standards than did its predecessor.

Industries that have profited from federal land use have always lobbied for unlimited use of public lands, but in this latest effort, they enlist "ordinary people" to give

their Wise Use Movement the appearance of a popular cause. Savvy public relations techniques have helped to package the movement as one “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” Lessons learned from the past have been incorporated and strategies have been further developed. Industry groups have recognized some major flaws in past campaigns and have adjusted their methods accordingly. These methods, which will be discussed later, coupled with solid financial backing, are the core of the Wise Use program.

In the wake of the Wise Use conference, anti-environmental organizing efforts began to increase and gain momentum. With the onset of a recession in the early 1990s, a significant segment of the American public became vulnerable to arguments that blamed the country’s economic and social problems on a variety of scapegoats, including environmentalists. Groups like People for the West! took full advantage of the situation, shrouding their commitment to maintaining the status quo and presenting themselves as the defenders of basic American rights and economic freedoms.

PART II. A Movement in Action: “People for the West!”

Fighting a War For the West

The Western way of life is coming under attack. There are people back East who don't understand where we're coming from. To them, the American West is the enemy. If they had their way, they would do away with mining, ranching and the rural communities that form the backbone of our country.

- U.S. Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), speaking to a group of miners in 1991 at a rally in Reno

A handful of rearview visionaries have staked out a consistent position on natural resource issues, choosing to defend the conventional against the unknown, the extractive against the regenerative, and promising that with a little financial support they can stem the tidal changes now occurring in the New West and across America.

- David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*

Advocates of mining, grazing, logging and other non-wilderness uses of public lands have taken a page from environmentalists' book by marshalling big money and organizational tactics like never before. This trend in the pitched battle over the future of public lands is evident in groups which have sprung up to combat environmental organizations and government agencies in the swelling conflict over the uses of public lands.¹⁴

People for the West! is one of the nation's largest anti-environment citizens groups, and is part of the burgeoning “multiple use” movement sweeping across the country. As its name implies, the group is largely concerned about the human aspect of natural resource policies in the western United States. Specifically, it advocates eliminating existing barriers to private gain from the use of federally-owned public lands. This includes mining, logging, ranching, and other economic activities. Although the

group officially distances itself from the Wise Use Movement, it maintains close ties to and good working relationships with a number of organizations that openly proclaim their status under the Wise Use umbrella.

Established by professional organizers Bill and Barbara Grannell, People for the West! is an offshoot of the Grannell's National Coalition for Public Lands and Natural Resources¹⁵ (NCPLNR), which is heavily financed by the mining and timber industries. The organization also sells memberships to various organizations, including conservation districts, grazing districts, school districts and others "from all walks of life" who are interested in public lands issues. The group has targeted certain western states with largely resource-dependent economies and residents who are desperately searching for answers to their economic woes.

NCPLNR began People for the West! as a campaign in 1990, largely in response to congressional efforts to scrap the 1872 Mining Law. Due to the campaign's success, it was decided to re-organize People for the West! as an independent coalition of local chapters throughout the western states. The Colorado-based PFW! now has over 120 active chapters throughout several western states.

People for the West!'s campaign has seen a boom in Montana, one of the group's key targets, which registers the most state chapters with twenty-two. According to Bill Grannell, former executive director of People for the West!, the group is "moderate and mainstream" and encompasses a broad-base of support. *People for the West!*, the group's monthly newsletter, claims that Montana was the first state targeted for organization

mainly because the state's congressmen sit on several key environmental committees. Among PFW!'s staunchest supporters are former U.S. Representative Ron Marlenee, former Governor Stan Stephens and Republican Senator Conrad Burns.

A letter, signed by six U.S. senators -- including Burns -- was sent out in 1990 on behalf of People for the West! to "friends of mining." In the letter, the senators accuse environmental organizations and some government agencies of trying to limit access to public lands, "for both work and play." It also says that these forces have decided that western "values, standards, jobs and lifestyles are expendable." "We will continue to fight but we can't do it alone," the letter continues, so "let politicians and the media know you-- the people -- are out there."

With the support and influence of conservative western legislators, the Wise Use Movement continued to gain steam in the early 1990s. The movement's mantra -- "economic development, not environmental stewardship" -- soon began to receive mainstream public attention in the political arena, where proponents had wanted it all along. The 1994 congressional elections may prove to have been the watershed moment for Wise Use, when anti-environmental forces stopped focusing on just "rallying their troops" around the cause, and "mounted up" for the long-awaited charge.

Congress's Last Stand

The Republican Juggernaut in the House continues to expand "cowboy socialism:" opening up vast stretches of public lands for exploitation by logging, mining, and ranching companies. None of them pays anything close to market prices for the right to destroy the land.

- Molly Ivins, political columnist

Let's face the truth: What this (Clinton) Administration wants is to control all Western life from within the Beltway of Washington, D.C....to destroy the freedom of lifestyle and economic choice that we in the West have thrived on.

- Ralph Noyes, chairman and president, NCPLNR

With the conservative victory in the 1994 elections, as reflected in Republican control of Congress, the Wise Use Movement regained its political voice. Experiencing a revival, the miners, loggers and ranchers who form the backbone of the movement were smiling again, daring to imagine renewed free use of federal land. For the first time since James Watt served as Ronald Reagan's interior secretary, people who support mining, timber-cutting and grazing on public lands felt tapped in to the seat of power.

Wise Use advocates have been active and in many cases successful in changing public opinion and translating their support into political action. The movement has gained considerable momentum in recent years and threatens a profound shift in the western political landscape. One need look no further than the current Congress, for instance, to find a correlation between popular Wise Use issues and the legislative agendas of many western senators and representatives.

The belief that all natural resources should be available for human exploitation will probably collapse under the weight of its own falsity, but for now, the Wise Use crowd is making progress and their influence is showing in Congressional legislation.¹⁶ In both its scope and aims, the anti-environmental agenda of federal legislators has been at least as aggressive as Ronald Reagan's in the early 1980s.¹⁷ Using a variety of tools, from economic boycotts to getting amendments attached to key pieces of legislation in Congress, the Wise Use movement has accomplished some of the goals which it set in

1988.¹⁸

Still, a central concern of People for the West! is that a growing number of U.S. congressmen are advocating “shutting down public land to any practical use,” including mining, timber, oil and gas development, livestock grazing and public recreation. Because the nation’s extractable natural resources are largely located on public lands in the West, the group believes that the development of those resources is needed to ensure a vigorous economy and to provide basic materials for living.¹⁹ People for the West! has its own vision for the future of public lands, and that involves “the preservation of multiple use.” This can be interpreted as continued access to and economic development of natural resources on public lands.

The first step in achieving PFW!’s aims was the establishment of active community chapters to voice western concerns to elected officials, respond to legislative challenges as they occur, and encourage its members to become politically active. PFW! now has six members in Congress, including recently elected U.S. Representative Helen Chenoweth (R-ID), the former secretary of PFW!’s Treasure Valley, Idaho chapter. She credited People for the West! for playing a major role in her election victory, saying, “It was a grassroots effort logistically, and they (PFW! members) wanted to see the West revived and returned to traditional Western values.” “People for the West! are my favorite people,” she proclaimed.²⁰ Along with Chenoweth are many more PFW! supporters serving in leadership roles as state governors and on planning commissions, water boards, advisory councils, and in other positions at the local and state levels.

Early in its campaign, the group launched a petition drive, with the goal of gathering one million signatures in support of its cause. The petition urged Congress to take a “strong stand in the face of environmental groups’ irrational appeals” and not depart from current law which “provides for both environmental protection and the sensible harvest of our important natural resources.” The petition also claimed that, “Despite the strong commitment by this nation to both provide goods and to protect its environment, an elitist group of environmental leaders wants to stop forever, natural resource development on all public lands in the United States.”²¹

Although not a single piece of major anti-environment legislation was passed in 1995 -- witness the defeat of the much heralded private property rights, or “takings” initiative -- the 104th Congress has definitely seemed more sympathetic to Wise Use issues. Despite their supposed “non-partisan” stance, for example, support for PFW! legislation has been generally partisan, with Republicans making up the majority.²² Environmental issues are shaping up to be a defining force in the 1996 elections, and People for the West! no doubt intends to stay alert and “keep the powder dry.”

Clearly, one premise behind the People for the West! campaign is that politicians can count. Count voters, that is. However, People for the West! claims a membership in Montana of just over 900. Statewide, it is estimated that some 8,000 people are paying memberships to various Wise Use groups.²³ Although the movement represents only one percent of the state population, it represents a potent political force. It is precisely its ability to present the appearance of a huge groundswell of grassroots support for its

campaign that has caused elected officials to sit up and take notice of People for the West!

"They distort the truth," says Representative Bill Richardson (D-NM), who has frequently clashed with People for the West! activists. But he cautions against dismissing their objectives, and calls them the "first threat to the environmental movement that I have seen in ten years. They are a legitimate political force."²⁴ Outnumbered in Congressional representation and far removed from Capitol Hill, People for the West! realizes that their interests are best served by enlisting the support of western Americans at the grassroots level. Since it began organizing in Montana, the group's clout has been brought to bear on numerous national and local issues.

Waging the Campaign

Small-town rural America has become disenfranchised...The members of the social elite of these rural ghettos -- mine company operators, wealthy ranchers, and gyppo loggers -- anxious to deflect their neighbors' anger and frustration away from themselves and their corporate sponsors, have become the local leaders and champions of People for the West!.

- David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*

The radical environmental path always seems to lead East... Perhaps the most inspiring result of the People for the West! campaign to keep public lands open to productive and wise use is that people decided to take command of their own destinies instead of turning them over to those who have little understanding or appreciation of the Western way of life.

- John Willson, president and CEO
Pegasus Gold Corporation

Former Congressman Mike Synar (D-OK), a long-time grazing reform advocate and one of the few members of Congress who refused to accept PAC money once referred to Wise Use proponents as "a bunch of whining welfare cowboys."²⁵ He accused them of double-

talk and deception for railing against regulations and advocating free enterprise, while refusing to pay the fair market value of the assets they use up on federal lands, whether it is timber, minerals, or grazing land.

Bill Grannell of People for the West! could not disagree with Synar more. Westerners, Grannell argues, should decide these issues, not someone back East. By “back East,” Grannell and his group’s supporters mean politicians and agency bureaucrats who have been influenced by what he believes are uncaring environmental organizations, ignorant of the ways of the West. “There ought to be a Western agenda since 67 percent of the federal lands are in 12 Western states and 95 percent of the wilderness is in the West,” says Grannell.²⁶

Montana, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona -- these are the western states that People for the West! has focused most of its attention on. Why these five? Each of those states has substantial public lands; is dependent on mining, timber and grazing; and each has representatives in Washington, D.C. who sit on crucial committees. Efforts to make environmental laws more restrictive, or to tighten them up administratively, must be held in check in these states, if PFW!’s campaign to form a true western political agenda is to succeed (See Appendix B).

With People for the West!’s underlying presumption that environmental groups are out of touch with mainstream America, and that their success has, in part, forced the environmental movement to become more radical, the group has led an aggressive campaign for control of land use decisions in the West. Other Wise Use groups have

mounted similar efforts, but PFW! has the best track record, seems to have the best chance of continuing success, and is the one being talked about from Capitol Hill to the California desert. As indicated by the following examples of its activities in Montana, People for the West! is not all headlines and rallies. Indeed, PFW!'s campaign has achieved startling results.

Digging For Support

The Mining Act of 1872 may be the "granddaddy" of anti-environmental subsidies. Environmentalists routinely charge that the law, under which mining companies extract billions of dollars worth of precious minerals from public lands, has outlived its usefulness and should be reformed. While it may have helped develop the West by encouraging settlement, it is now virtually giving it away, they argue. However, environmentalists have been losing the battle to reform the 124-year old mining law because they are not as well organized as industry-backed groups like People for the West!.

The law in question was passed the same year Yellowstone Park was set aside, twenty years before national forests were established and thirty years before multiple use existed as a management concept. It instituted mining as "the preferred use of public land." Most minerals (coal, oil and other nonmetallic minerals) have been removed from this law in previous reforms and metals mining -- like gold and silver -- remains as the only industry not required to pay federal royalties on the resources it takes from public lands. Perhaps most distressing, it allows those who own profitable claims on federal

lands to buy the land at a nominal price.

In 1991, U.S. Representative Nick Rahall (D-WV) and U.S. Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AK), introduced bills in Congress to reform the mining law. Proposed revision was a focal point for environmental groups that wanted tighter control of an industry they contended had virtual free reign on federally-owned public lands. Mining and industry groups quickly set about galvanizing support to block revision of a law which was bringing them immense profits (See Appendix C).

Mining companies were particularly concerned that reform measures would impose excessively strict environmental standards. "These are attempts by preservationist groups to put the industry out of business," said Gary Langley of the Montana Mining Association.²⁷ Through the National Coalition for Public Lands & Natural Resources, the mining industry funded the creation of a grassroots campaign to organize public opposition to reform efforts. This campaign -- "People for the West!" -- took the lead in fighting any and all legislative efforts to change the 1872 Mining Law. PFW! centered the campaign around the premise that reforming the law would mean the end of multiple use for everyone, a blatant deception engineered to draw wider support for its position.

People for the West! equates mining to the use of public lands by ranchers, loggers, snowmobilers, hunters, hikers, and others, but there are important differences. For instance, ranchers pay to graze their cattle on public lands, but those engaged in hardrock mining are not required to pay rental or leasing fees. In addition, when miners

stake and patent a claim they can make this public land their private property for as little as \$2.50 to \$5.00 per acre. Patenting actually ends forever all multiple use management of this land by preventing all other uses. During its initial organizing efforts, People for the West! neglected to point out these crucial facts. They continue to blur the distinction between single use activities such as mining and increased public access through multiple use.

According to People for the West!, the “attack” on the 1872 Mining Law was indicative of a “conspiracy among national environmental groups to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to convince Congress and the American people that federal lands should be closed to all human activity.” Working with mining companies to provide bus transportation to public hearings on the mining law, PFW! staged a series of anti-reform rallies which drew hundreds of miners and other multiple users. At one such event, Bill Grannell stated, “There is a realization now that we’re all fighting the same battle to keep preservationists from driving us off public lands.” He repeated his group’s theme of unity among all public lands users at subsequent rallies: “We’re all in this together...All multiple use groups should oppose any attempts to remove people from the public lands.”²⁸

Amid enthusiastic speakers, a visual sea of American flags waving in the air, the playing of the national anthem, and repeated choruses of “God Bless America,” many public lands users joined the mining crusade. Thousands of mining supporters (including ranchers, recreationists, and others) participated in PFW!-engineered rallies hoping to

influence congressional hearings on the proposed legislation. Due, in large part, to their stiff opposition, both Rep. Rahall's HR-918 and Sen. Bumpers' S-433 failed in Congress, and were subsequently scrapped.

A Lack of "Vision" for Yellowstone

In September 1991 Wise Use pressure, directed primarily by People for the West!, led to the defeat of a proposal to protect Yellowstone Park and its surrounding ecosystem, known as the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). The U.S. Forest Service and the Park Service had attempted to design a framework for the coordinated management of the GYA, which comprises 20 million acres in six national forests and two national parks in the states of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. The result of their collaboration was a document entitled the "Vision for the Future."

The "Vision" document was designed to maintain the renowned resources, unique features, and ecological integrity of the entire area while meeting the challenge of providing the important products and services that support local economies. It focused on three major goals: conserving the region's "sense of naturalness," encouraging biologically and economically sustainable opportunities, and improving coordination between management agencies.²⁹

When a sixty-page draft of the document was released in July 1990, its intentions became hotly disputed. Many environmental groups criticized the "Vision" for being too vague and not going far enough in terms of environmental protection, but industry groups quickly labeled it "preservationist" and demanded that it be "trashed."³⁰ The harshest

criticism, by far, came from People for the West!, and their strength caught the environmental community off guard. PFW! led the charge against the proposal, claiming that its “secret agenda” would result in an eightfold expansion of the park. Although the document mentioned nothing about placing any restrictions on the rights of private land owners, PFW! charged that its “anti-people” bent would mean a ban on all mining, logging, grazing, hunting, fishing, and just about every other activity.³¹

PFW! dominated a series of public meetings on the issue. The group bused in caravans of angry citizens who were convinced that they were fighting for nothing less than their lives and their land. A large contingent of the group were on hand at every meeting, wearing yellow arm bands and lapel pins as a sign of solidarity against the “Vision” document and in support of multiple use. More than 500 attended a hearing in Bozeman on January 24, 1991, to virulently protest the plan. During the meeting, Yellowstone National Park superintendent Bob Barbee was called a Nazi and a Communist.³²

Fewer people spoke in favor of the document at the hearings than those who opposed it, with environmentalists often outnumbered 20-to-1. Many of the people who testified told the agency people they were third, fourth or fifth generation Montanans, who struggled to survive. They said governmental policies were already too restrictive, and expressed fears that the plan’s focus on limiting environmental impact in the area would make things more difficult.³³ People for the West! urged the committee to rewrite the document to include stronger provisions to protect multiple use in national forests

surrounding the park.

Environmentalists accused People for the West! and their affiliated groups of deliberately misinterpreting the document for political purposes. Such rhetoric, they insisted, prevented the public from considering the real issues. They tried to convince the committee that the opposition's populist veneer was a sham, as were the assertions by People for the West! that its outraged citizen members were spontaneously flocking to public meetings in protest.

Lillian Herne, a local environmental activist, attended the PFW! pre-hearing rally the evening of the Bozeman hearing. She said that the spokesman for PFW! stated that the purpose of the proposal was to drive people off the public and private lands. "If I had not read the document myself, I would have been angry, too. However, I had read it cover to cover, not just the few sentences they recommended we read." It was evident, Herne said, "that People for the West! had indeed tried to mislead us."³⁴

Whether or not People for the West! had indeed used the guise of multiple use to rally support for their own private "vision," they succeeded in their objective. By deliberately polarizing the issue, they pitted citizens against one another for their own political gains. Victory was achieved when the Department of the Interior gutted the original "Vision," shortening the document to ten pages and eliminating any reference to ecosystems management or environmental priorities.

In July 1993, a congressional committee released a report indicating what many had suspected all along, that the Wise Use Movement played a significant role in the

Yellowstone “Vision” process. The report revealed that “an improper concerted activity by powerful commodity and special interest groups” undermined the document because they “perceived it as a threat.”³⁵ The fifteen-month investigation found evidence to indicate that individuals and groups involved in the “concerted activity” artificially produced the appearance of negative public opinion at a few, select, local public meetings. The report stated, “Extraordinary outside pressure was brought under the guise of populist comment...the perception of substantial public comment hostile to the Draft document was, in reality, almost entirely manufactured.” This negative public reaction was then used later to justify the document’s major revisions,³⁶ and its ultimate demise.

With the controversial Yellowstone “Vision” document, People for the West! effectively utilized its financial and organizational resources to achieve a major victory in western public lands management. The revised document de-emphasized preservation and environmental protection by protecting grazing and mining interests, removing language that threatened timber production, and loosening restrictions on oil and gas producers. Overall, extractive commodity interests were pleased with the new document, while environmentalists were left shocked and bewildered in the wake of their opponents’ political onslaught.

A Free Ride on the Range

Nationwide, 27,000 ranchers graze livestock on nearly 300 million acres of federal lands. Montana has 15,200 cattle ranches and 2,700 sheep operations, many of them dependent on public lands for grazing.³⁷ Ranchers, though not great in number, are

a politically potent force in the arid West. Often descended from the first settlers, they still form the economic backbone of many rural communities. They also occupy a somewhat honored place in the national mythos as range-riding, rugged individualists and true American heroes from the country's rough and tumble days.

The reality of that Marlboro Man image is shaky. Government surveys show that just 10 percent of the holders of federal grazing permits control nearly half of the grazing land. Ranchers emphasize the other 90 percent, saying they are mostly family-size operations running fewer than 500 head of cattle.³⁸ Whoever they are, ranchers kept a low profile during the Reagan-Bush years, enjoying the user-friendly policies of Interior Secretary James Watt and his successors. But they began chafing at the reform-minded Clinton administration.

The political effectiveness of People for the West! was again demonstrated during the controversy over federal efforts to increase grazing fees on public lands. Legislative efforts attempted to nearly double the fee ranchers pay to graze a cow and a calf for a month on federal land, from \$1.45 to \$3.45. Even more worrisome to many Westerners were provisions to dilute ranchers' influence on grazing advisory boards and let the government suspend permits of ranchers who do not meet environmental standards. Environmental groups supported reform efforts, reasoning that studies showed how badly the range had been maintained. Ranchers, citing their own studies, argued that new laws and fees would bankrupt them and that they were the ones who really knew how to care for the land.

People for the West! marshalled its pro-multiple use forces and faced off against progressive, reform-minded interior secretary Bruce Babbitt -- who hails from an old Arizona ranching family -- and urban Westerners, who were pressuring the government to become more sensitive to environmental and aesthetic concerns. Despite seemingly overwhelming odds -- urban residents far outnumber their rural neighbors in the West -- the group once again rallied various public lands users around the "multiple use" cause and helped to defeat the price-raising measures. After the vote on the legislation, *People for the West!* published the roll call, urging pressure on those members of Congress who had refused to oppose the measure. In the wake of the controversy, long-time grazing reform advocates like Mike Synar lost their seats in Congress in the 1994 elections.

Undaunted, the Clinton administration continued its support for the Interior Department's initiative to institute grazing reform, and in August 1995 implemented Babbitt's recommended "Rangeland Reform" regulations. Again People for the West! fought back, pressuring conservative lawmakers to adopt legislation to replace the administration's requirements. Senator Pete Dominici (R-NM) subsequently introduced "The Public Rangelands Management Bill" (S-1459), intended to give ranchers more control over grazing policies on federal lands.

A coalition of over 150 conservation and sportsmen groups viewed this bill as an attack on multiple use management, resources protection and public participation. S-1459 proposed to only modestly increase grazing fees (from \$1.35 to \$1.85 per animal unit)³⁹, exempt grazing decisions from review under the National Environmental Policy

Act, and allow permits to be issued every twelve years (instead of the current ten years). It would also limit the ability of federal rangeland managers to adjust grazing levels, and severely restrict public participation in the permitting process by allowing only grazing interests to formally challenge agency actions.⁴⁰ Simply put, the bill prioritized ranching concerns at the expense of wildlife, hunters, hikers, and the like.⁴¹

During contentious floor debate on the legislation, Senator Dominici claimed that his bill reaffirmed multiple use values and protected the traditional livelihood and lifestyle of western ranchers. Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT) supported the legislation, sounding much like a poster child for the Wise Use community. He railed against existing grazing regulations which he said were just another example of the mind set of “those in Washington, D.C. who would rather decisions were made thousands of miles away from the folks concerned, instead of on the ground at the local level where folks know best.” Burns reaffirmed the West’s deep distrust of “where the administration and Babbitt are taking us,” and cited wolf reintroduction as “yet another example of how the federal government doesn’t understand the Western way of life.” Echoing standard People for the West! dogma, Burns chastised his opponents in Congress for failing to “put people back into the equation” when it comes to managing federal lands.⁴²

A number of Democratic legislators from the West spoke against S-1459, choosing instead to support a substitute amendment which they believed to be a more balanced approach. Senator Richard Bryan (D-NV) claimed that Dominici’s bill would “be a step backward in range management to the days of James Watt...who was never

accused of being an environmentalist.” Bryan defended the traditional lifestyle of rural westerners and admitted that they have legitimate concerns. However, he noted that the West has experienced dramatic demographic change whereby most westerners favor increased recreational opportunities and the preservation of aesthetic qualities such as wildlife.

Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) also opposed the Dominici bill, expressing concerns that even if it passed it would be subject to almost certain veto by President Clinton. He noted that while most ranchers were “hard-working, honest Americans, and good stewards of the land,” some “bad apples” simply did not care about the environmental health of the land. Like Senator Bryan, Reid feared that S-1459 would result in the unfair elevation of ranching as the single use of the land. He expressed the need to ensure that other interests -- such as hunters, fishermen and off-road vehicle users -- benefit from “true” multiple use management that provides for public access.

Reid also agreed with Bryan that recreation was a primary concern of urban citizens who now represent an overwhelming majority of the population in the West. “Cattlemen aren’t the only ones who use public lands, and it doesn’t belong only to them...They have competition, particularly from those who enjoy and demand free and open access to outdoor activities.”

Other senators opposing S-1459 claimed that it would create instability among the ranching industry and hostility from other public lands users who favor environmental stewardship. They argued that the bill would give too much power to ranchers over

rangeland management decisions. They were especially concerned that the measure would reduce environmental protection of 260 million acres of federally owned rangeland by preventing land managers from the BLM and Forest Service from effectively preventing industry abuses and excluding non-ranching interests from decision-making.

Protests against the bill were to no avail, however, as the Senate passed S-1459 by a 51-46 vote. The vote was largely party-line, but five Democrats cast decisive votes for the measure. The bill proceeded to the House of Representatives where it is expected to pass quickly. Chalk up yet another victory for the Wise Use Movement, thanks to the concerted organizing efforts of People for the West! and their conservative supporters in Congress.

Because of their efforts to resist new regulations and scale back existing restrictions relating to public lands uses, People for the West! has been labeled by some critics as "People for the Past." The organization has embroiled itself in natural resource issues in the West, and continues its involvement in many ways. To be effective means getting the word out to a large segment of the general public of the western states and beyond, and that takes a lot of money. Implementing effective strategy is also crucial to the success of a well-organized campaign like People for the West!. It is important, then, to take a deeper look at where the money comes from, and how it is spent to get results.

PART III. Wise Guys or Wise Guise?

Cash-Roots Activism

With People for the West!...it's the people who decide what to do. There are no big organizations or "giants" of any kind that set the campaign course.

- flyer, People for the West!

It is bankrolled by the extractive industries...Its supporters are corporations, not people, and they are mostly from the East or Canada. People for the West! is neither.

- Jim Jensen, (MEIC)

The rhetoric that Wise Use represents a genuine grassroots organizing effort on the part of concerned citizens is typical of the movement. Since its inception, however, critics have claimed that the movement's true motives are based on profit and greed. The primary beneficiaries of Wise Use activities are said to be the resource-based industries who provide funding support, not the "foot soldiers" or citizen members who have been duped into believing that they are fighting for their jobs and for justice, rather than for the corporate bottom line.

Environmentalists and others frequently cite Wise Use groups' close ties to large corporations and their well-financed campaigns as proof that protecting the interests of average citizens is the least of their concerns. By accepting enormous amounts of money from companies who profit from their anti-environmental activities, Wise Use opponents charge that the movement represents a "false populism," mobilizing communities not to take control of their own destinies, but to eliminate any remaining controls on big business -- in essence, enlisting workers and their communities as agents of their own

destruction.

In this “war of words,” the Wise Use Movement has been branded as little more than a clever front for public lands profiteers. Ron Arnold, a founder and leader of the Wise Use Movement, once described the premise of private self interest hidden behind a front of citizen involvement when advising a timber association:

*The public is completely convinced that when you speak as an industry, you are speaking out of nothing but self-interest. Give them [grassroots activist groups] the money. You can stop defending yourselves, let them do it, and you get the hell out of the way. Because citizens' groups have credibility and industries don't. [Such groups] can turn the public against your enemies.*⁴³

Many people accuse People for the West! of being a classic front group for mining and other commodity interests. “They depend, not on the generosity of individuals at the bottom, but on large infusions of capital at the top...they are merely pawns for the big guys,” said Jim Jensen, the director of the Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC).⁴⁴ Such accusations are not exclusive to the environmental community. Chuck Cushman, a leading Wise Use activist and president of the American Inholders Society, called People for the West!’s founder and former executive director, Bill Granell “just a profiteer,” and added, “Mostly his work is about money.”⁴⁵

Mister, Can You Spare a Dime?

When the group began organizing in Montana in July 1990, People for the West! claimed \$261,000 in its coffers.⁴⁶ In 1991, one of its newsletters indicated that its multi-state campaign had amassed over \$750,000 -- about 75 percent of it from the mining industry⁴⁷ -- to counter “attacks by radical environmentalists” by giving western

communities a voice in public lands management.⁴⁸ Based on IRS nonprofit returns, in 1991 the National Coalition for Public Lands & Natural Resources (NCPLNR) -- which created and still operates People for the West! -- had \$627,135. That figure has increased steadily each year, providing the group with an average annual operating budget of \$800,000.⁴⁹

It is generally accepted that most of the established anti-environmental groups operate on annual budgets in the range of \$50,000 to \$500,000. People for the West!, which claims a national membership of 20,000, now boasts a budget in excess of \$1.7 million.⁵⁰ Approximately 90 percent of its financial support comes from 200 corporations.⁵¹ Who backs the campaign? According to the group's newsletters, contributors include major corporations with a vested interest in its campaign initiatives.

People for the West!, whose primary objective has been fighting reform of the 1872 Mining Act, is closely tied to the mineral extraction industry. Looking at its funding sources, therefore, it is not difficult to determine the "giant" at the heart of its campaign. Early on NCPLNR did not hesitate to indicate corporate involvement in its "People for the West!" campaign. Its organizational literature did not even mince words about industry sponsorship, as evidenced by this line from a PFW! flier in 1990: "Is your company or association on this list? If your company has yet to contribute to the campaign, talk to them, convince them we all need to work together. We need their help!"

Although People for the West! no longer publishes an active contributors list and

refuses to release such information publicly, in 1990 some major contributors included: Nerco Minerals, a mining company based in Washington (\$100,000); Nerco, Inc., a Portland-based petroleum subsidiary of Nerco Minerals (\$85,000); Chevron, U.S.A. of San Francisco (\$45,000); Bond Gold Corporation, a Colorado-based mining company; and Hecla Mining of California (\$30,000). Several other mining companies chipped in \$15,000 each -- Homestake Mining, the American Mining Congress and Canadian-owned Pegasus Gold. Smaller operations, such as Westmont Mining, Inc. and Crown Resource Corporation to name a few showed their support to the tune of \$5000 each.⁵² In 1991, in addition to the above supporters, a People for the West! newsletter listed the following contributors:

- FMC Gold Company of Reno, NV (\$5,000)
- Eddy Potash, Inc. of Carlsbad, NM (\$2,500)
- Dayton Development Corporation of Vancouver, B.C. (\$2,000)
- Franco Nevada Mining Corp. of Toronto, Ontario (\$1,000)
- U.S. Precious Metals, Ltd. of Auburn, CA (\$1,000)
- Centurion Gold, Ltd. of Auburn, CA (\$1,000)
- Atlas Corp. of Denver, CO (\$1,000)
- Minrex Resources, Ltd., of Vancouver, B.C. (\$1,000)
- Euro-Nevada Mining Corp., of Toronto, Ontario (\$1,000)

There is a strong correlation between financial support for PFW!'s campaign and affiliation with NCPLNR, the parent entity of People for the West!. NCPLNR's board of directors is made up almost exclusively of corporate officials from the mining, oil and gas industry, and timber industries. In 1992, for instance, 12 of its 13 board members were mining executives.⁵³ With \$15,000 being the minimum amount required for voting representation, board members in 1991 included executives of the following companies:

- Pegasus Gold Corporation (WA)
- Asamera Minerals Inc. (WA)
- Energy Fuels Corporation (CO)
- Freeport McMoran Gold Company (LA)
- Bond Gold Corporation (CO)
- Northwest Mining Association (WA)
- Bodie Consolidated Mining Company (CA)
- NERCO Minerals Company (WA)
- Cyprus Minerals Company (CA)
- Hanel Lumber Company, Inc. (OR)
- Golden Sunlight Mines, Inc. (MT)
- Homestake Mining Company (CA)
- Chevron, U.S.A., Inc. (CA)

The members of NCPLNR's executive committee have included:⁵⁴

- Thomas Albenese, chairman and president; also senior vice-president of Nerco and chief operating officer of Nerco Minerals Company, a natural resources company with gold and silver mining interests in Nevada, Idaho, and Colorado. 1992 CORPORATE DONATION: \$100,000

- Robert Reveles, vice-chair, also vice-president of government affairs, Home Stake Mining Company, which operates in South Dakota, California, Nevada, and Montana. 1992 CORPORATE DONATION: \$15,000

- Pamela Shouldis, secretary/treasurer, also public affairs director for Energy Fuels, a uranium company in Colorado. 1992 CORPORATE DONATION: \$15,000

It is interesting to note that, according to IRS records, these organizational officers received no compensation whatsoever from NCPLNR.⁵⁵ Further, each claimed a maximum of just one hour of work per week on behalf of the organization. It is obvious, then, that the group's executive positions are nominal; officers are nothing more than figureheads who leave the day-to-day operational duties to paid staff.⁵⁶

Sticks and Stones

Barbara Granell, wife of Bill and his successor as executive director of People for the West!, takes exception to the contention of environmentalists that the group is predominantly funded by large corporations. She fiercely denies the charge, and once responded that such people "like to paint a picture of us as loaded with corporate money

and fighting extreme environmentalists who have no money.” Refusing to admit to an apparent conflict of interest, she claims that many traditional environmental groups employ similar tactics. “The truth is,” she argues, “our budget pales in comparison with the more prominent environmental organizations in this country.”⁵⁷

It is true that environmental groups receive large contributions from wealthy individuals, foundations, and corporations. As part of their anti-elitist rhetoric, People for the West! disseminates figures indicating that the environmental “establishment” generates an annual gross income in the neighborhood of \$3 to \$5 billion. It is uncertain how the group arrived at such an amount. The “anti-greens” claim to be doing their nationwide organizing work on a gross income of between \$10 million and \$100 million a year⁵⁸, a far smaller amount than they claim environmental movement has available to work with.

Such estimates, however, can mislead by failing to take into account the various “in kind” services provided by corporations to Wise Use groups like People for the West!. Unlike most environmental groups, these anti-environment groups often receive generous assistance in the form of loaned materials, such as automobiles, office space and equipment, staff support, and so on. For example, PFW!’s August 1990 *Campaign Report!* noted that Crown Butte Resources LTD of Billings generously provided office headquarters for the People for the West! campaign. The mining company’s secretary also handled administrative work and answered the phone for PFW!. This kind of non-monetary support to Wise Use groups provides a notable advantage.

Guilt by Association

Besides the fact that People for the West! is primarily funded by major industrial corporations, some opponents cite the needs of the working man. "Our big criticism is that they've not been up front with the citizens of this state," said Don Judge, executive secretary of the Montana AFL-CIO. "These guys haven't demonstrated they give one twit about the work force in Montana."⁵⁹ People for the West!, for instance, has supported a repeal of the prevailing wage law and supports right-to-work legislation.⁶⁰

According to Pam Egan, AFL-CIO legislative director, NCPLNR claimed to be trying to expand its board of directors because of its "industry-dominated appearance." In order to diversify its coalition of supporters, the group attempted to sell a board of directors membership to the Montana State AFL-CIO for \$15,000 a year. They have since added representatives to their board from state and local governments, hoping to project a more "broad-based" appearance.⁶¹

People for the West! supporters do not deny that commodity industries help fund the group's organizing activities, but claim that it is a true grassroots movement with local support. In the endless debate over whose grassroots run deeper, however, perhaps the best explanation for the group's cozy relationship with industry rests with Barbara Grannell. In an issue of *People for the West!*,⁶² she wrote the following plea for corporate support:

Corporate America: The opportunity is now!...Since PFW! started, company dollars have been essential to help run the campaign. We need your continued help, increased help and new help...Now is the time for Corporate America to really get behind and support the committed membership of this organization.

Please call today and tell me how much your company can give.

Strangely enough, that same newsletter issue noted that just twenty-eight percent of the group's total revenue in 1992 had come from individuals. One must assume People for the West! believes that seventy-two percent funding from "Corporate America" constitutes a genuine grassroots campaign. Perhaps numbers really don't lie.

Money is clearly an important factor in explaining the success of People for the West!, but perhaps the true secret to its public support and political influence lies elsewhere. In war, it is crucial to "know one's enemy." People for the West! has obviously accepted this fundamental truism, and has learned to apply the concept in its campaign by adopting some of the tactics that have long been associated with the environmental movement. However, Wise Use groups like People for the West! have developed an organizing style all their own.

Stealth Strategies and Stolen Tactics

We are in a war. We have tactics, we have strategies, we intend to win.

- Ron Arnold, CDFE

What group is hitting the streets with a petition drive reminiscent of that to remove Watt from office? What group has highly organized phone trees and gets huge turnouts at environmental hearings? What group can make delegations change their position on environmental issues, due to sustained grassroots and media pressure? If you smugly answered "the Sierra Club," not only were you wrong, you were probably caught in a 15 year time warp. The correct answer is People for the West!.

- Sierra Club newsletter (Sept/Oct 1991)

Americans do not trust many institutions. In particular, they do not trust large business interests, especially on issues of public policy. And they particularly distrust those

business interests that have a long track record of doing harm to the public or to the environment, like Union Carbide or Exxon. Americans do, however, tend to trust genuine, community-based and membership organizations, such as environmental groups. And they particularly trust those public-interest advocates who do not have an economic stake in the outcome of policy debates.⁶³

Lobbyists for narrow economic interests cannot argue for or against policy change on the basis that it will make or lose them millions of dollars. They need to find a rationale for arguing that the policies they advocate are in the broad public interest, and their economic stake is just incidental. Since the public is usually wary of business lobbies,⁶⁴ a prime “stealth” lobbying technique is the creation of organizations designed to look, sound, and pass for genuine citizens groups. While the means may be grassroots, the ends certainly are not.

Genuine coalitions or citizen organizations derive their legitimacy from the active support of their members within a democratic framework. Their leaders are chosen, or authorized to speak, by their members. The members contribute their own time and/or money to the cause; their policy positions are fought out and approved by members or their representatives. In this way, the organization earns and gains credibility as a vehicle for the expression of a significant community viewpoint. But front groups are different.⁶⁵

Wise Use leaders claim that their movement represents many million Americans, but people who pay individual dues or actively participate in ongoing Wise Use efforts number far fewer than a hundred thousand. Still, the movement has rather high visibility

and engages in expensive political activities. To date, the strength of anti-environmentalism has not been in its membership roles but in its ability to mobilize a network of core activists to intervene in and politicize local conflicts, creating a perception of power that they hope can be used as a springboard for further expansion.⁶⁶

Wise Use has achieved relative success by painting itself as a grassroots crusade against special interests, that is, environmentalists. Alarmed by the success of the environmental movement, traditional western industries such as mining, logging, and ranching have, in essence, tried to duplicate it by forming grassroots groups in a loose-knit coalition dedicated to the “wise use” of natural resources. The movement aims to create and mold disaffection over environmental regulations, big government, and the media into a cohesive social force that can win respectability for centrist arguments seeking to “protect jobs, private property and the economy by finding a balance between human and environmental needs.”

So far this corporate-sponsored environmental backlash has enjoyed relative success selling itself as a populist movement. By manipulating people’s concerns and cloaking its corporate ties, the Wise Use Movement has somewhat successfully created the illusion of a spontaneous grassroots groundswell of outrage against what it believes to be excessive and overly restrictive environmental regulations. It is important to analyze how Wise Use puts a populist veneer on industry campaigns.

A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing

What’s in a name? As has been pointed out by the National Wildlife Federation⁶⁷

and others, industry-funded organizations often attempt to disguise themselves under eco-friendly names. They are forced to do so because of the public's profound commitment to natural resources, wildlife, parks and wild places, and because they know that most people would not support environmentally harmful corporate agendas.

Some Wise Use groups may sound harmless -- their names often connote "traditional values," "productive harmony" and "patriotism" -- but their aims, and their rationale, are not. Some groups opt for a benign qualifier such as "sensible" or "responsible," but their intentions are anything but. They call themselves "committees," "concerned citizens" and "coalitions" but are, in actuality, the creations of public relations firms for big industries. Deception is necessary to legitimate a successful front group, and much creativity is channeled into the task of naming these groups for anything but what they truly are -- lobbying arms of corporations. Examples of this so-called "greenscamming" include:⁶⁸

Abundant Wildlife Society of America - an advocacy group for hunters, loggers and miners opposed to development restrictions on public lands, and which claims that regulations protecting species habitat are entirely unnecessary because enough wildlife already exists.

Alliance for a Responsible CFC Policy - initiated by chemical and petroleum companies to fight the phaseout of CFCs, the chemical emission deemed harmful to the planet's protective ozone layer.

Alliance for Sensible Environmental Regulation - a group of trade associations representing polluting industries.

American Council on Science and Health - created and funded by chemical firms, it argues that Americans should not be worried about health problems resulting from additives and pesticides in foods.

Citizens for a Sound Economy - started by conservative foundations trade groups, and petroleum and tobacco companies to advocate, among other issues, limitations on citizen rights to sue corporations and an overhaul of the Food and Drug Administration.

Citizens for Sensible Control of Acid Rain - funded and operated by electric and coal utilities with the goal of defeating a Clean Air Act acid rain amendment.

Coalition for Sensible Environmental Regulation - actually an association of western developers and corporate farmers.

Coalition for Vehicle Choice - created by automakers in 1990 to lobby against increased fuel efficiency standards.

Endangered Species Reform Coalition - sponsored by utility companies and other industries to promote efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act.

Marine Preservation Association - a group organized by fifteen oil companies, whose charter states that by marine preservation it means "to promote the welfare and interests of the petroleum and energy industries."

- ***Northwesterners For More Fish*** - represents clients made up of big utilities and other companies in the Northwest under attack by environmental groups for depleting the salmon population.

Half-Grass Organizations

Of course, there are ordinary citizens who share the policy objectives of corporate lobbyists, but few feel deeply enough to get organized. Often these individuals possess legitimate worries about jobs and the economy. They are frustrated with government and some federal environmental policies, but feel powerless to do anything about it. Enter the Wise Use Movement. Such communities are fertile ground for organizing activity and their disaffected citizens are fodder for anti-environmental campaigns. The role of such "half-grass" organizations is to both arouse and mobilize latent feelings, and to falsely

raise lawmakers' perceptions of the breadth and intensity of these feelings.⁶⁹ People for the West! has taken this tactic further, by portraying itself as the last bastion of hope for western communities facing economic uncertainty and political disenchantment.

Despite the fact that most of its funding comes from extractive industries -- with many of these companies headquartered outside of the United States (See Appendix D) -- and the fact that it is directed by corporate executives, People for the West! vigorously denies that it is merely a front for the extractive resource industry. "It's a natural thing for management and the work force to combine their efforts," said Bob Reveles, Homestake Mining's vice president for government affairs and co-chairman of the PFW! strategy committee.⁷⁰

Contrary to the historically strained relationship between management and labor, Reveles insists that his company wants to help the workers in every way it can. Don Judge, head of the Montana State AFL-CIO, is skeptical of such claims, and doubts the sincerity of People for the West!. "We're not impugning the integrity of the workers and citizens involved in the programs," he said. "We question the motives and money of big industry and their interests in disguising this effort as a grassroots campaign."⁷¹

Judge believes that in the effort to "develop everything" workers will suffer along with the environment. Although the movement preaches balance and "wise use," its underlying philosophy, he says, is based on the use that best benefits corporate and business interests. Their belief in "short-run, cut-and-run economic yield over sustainable" practices, Judge argues, reflects an inherent disregard and utter contempt for

the very people -- workers -- they claim to represent.⁷²

Regardless of what its critics think, People for the West! proclaims itself as “a non-partisan, grassroots campaign of working Americans who care about their heritage, their jobs, their families, and their futures!” Its members are said to be bound together by their quest for realistic environmental protection balanced with economic growth, their willingness to get involved and keep informed, and their “devotion to (their) country and (their) kids.”⁷³ Their message is superficially mainstream -- supporting “multiple use” and favoring a balance between economic development and environmental protection -- and has drawn many people with moderate views into the Wise Use fold.

Congressman George Miller (D-CA), an avid opponent of groups like People for the West!, has his own opinion. “What you have with Wise Use is a lot of special interests who are trying to generate some ideological movement to try and disguise what it is individually they want in the name of their own profits, their own greed in terms of the use and abuse of federal lands.”⁷⁴ For some reason or another, however, a growing number of people choose to side with People for the West! and other organizations like it on issues relating to the environment.

If You Can't Beat Them, Kick Them

History is clear about the fact that when people are anxious about their economic futures, they are susceptible to scapegoating. The Wise Use Movement has capitalized on the heightened level of anxiety in the rural West and has identified environmentalism as the principle cause of unemployment problems, especially in logging towns. They

maintain this claim regardless of other contributing factors to job loss such as mechanization, resource depletion, and log exportation. Simultaneously, the movement pushes a more radical core agenda of “free-market environmentalism,” “privatization,” and the deregulation of industry.⁷⁵

Anti-environmental activists perceive themselves as working with, not for, resource industries. In trying to organize among resource workers and small independent businesspeople, they have even incorporated a thinly veiled “anti-intellectual” message, using class resentment as a cudgel by portraying environmentalists as wealthy elitists, part of the “green establishment.”⁷⁶ As Michael Greve of the Center for Individual Rights frames the situation, “The difference between an environmentalist and a greedy developer is that an environmentalist already has his mountain cabin. Environmentalism is a cause for the wealthy, for the haves against the have-nots.”⁷⁷

Another twist in the movement’s strategy is the development of an over-arching philosophy to counter what critics have dubbed the “anti-human” bias of groups such as the Sierra Club. Industry advocates who once couched their arguments solely in economic terms now speak of “man’s place in the ecosystem” and the obligation to use natural resources for the betterment of mankind. They call this vision “productive harmony.”⁷⁸

Standard rhetoric from Wise Use spokespeople accuses mainstream groups of exaggerating or even inventing environmental threats in order to advance narrow political goals that have little to do with safeguarding natural resources. Remarks made by Jeff

Harris, executive director of the National Coalition for Public Lands & Natural

Resources, are typical of this mind set:

Today the focus of debate is on reform of a U.S. environmental policy that has been out of control for over two decades. The realization has finally begun to sink in that in our zeal to protect the environment we have wasted hundreds of millions of dollars on ineffectual programs, attempted to solve many imaginary problems, and, in general, have been terribly misled by scheming politicians and social extremists. This scandalous affair that has needlessly cost jobs, depressed living standards and threatened our basic rights and freedoms is now on center stage, thanks to people like us.⁷⁹

People for the West! has found success in rallying disaffected individuals around its cause by adopting the common Wise Use tactic of pointing to an identifiable enemy.

It is not unusual for environmentalists to be placed in the leagues of Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and other infamous nemeses, and branded as “anti-God,” “anti-gun,” and “anti-American.”⁸⁰ Wise Use advocates enjoy casting environmentalism as the “new”

communism, a “repackaged” red menace intent on abolishing personal freedom. Rush Limbaugh, Pat Buchanan, and a host of other conservatives are fond of comparing environmentalism to a watermelon -- “green on the outside, and red in the middle.”⁸¹

George Will, in a column for *The Washington Post* (May 31, 1992), referred to the conservation movement as “a green tree with red roots,” calling it “the socialist dream...dressed up as compassion for the planet.”

Exploiting People's Fears

Although the campaign's corporate funders are motivated by greed, the grassroots members appear to be motivated by fear -- fear of the loss of their jobs, their homes, and their communities. Wise Use advocates have taken full advantage of existing trends and

popular concerns such as the general distrust of the federal government and the faltering economy. The movement relies heavily on scaring and confusing well meaning citizens, and capitalizes on their fears and dispositions to support positions which promote industry's short-term economic goals. Unfortunately, scare tactics work, even if only temporarily.

Wise Use organizers are skilled at capitalizing on fear and promoting hatred. For instance, Barbara Grannell made the following statement in *People for the West!*:

The preservationists are gearing up to intensify their attack on all public lands activity...If we don't do something, those clowns in Washington will throw in the ecofreaks and environmental whackos, resulting in us getting kicked off the public lands we all love so well.

In the same newsletter, People for the West! claimed that an "elite group of environmental leaders" wants to make extreme changes in federal law to stop, forever, natural resource development on all public lands in the United States. "These actions, if successful" the group claimed, "will devastate many communities, stripping many people in the West of their jobs, their dignity and their future."⁸²

Wise Use groups specialize in polarizing the debate over natural resource issues, blaming environmentalists for all kinds of social and economic problems, and making simplistic analyses of complex problems. In 1991 Dennis Winters, a paid organizer for the Western Environmental Trade Association (WETA)⁸³, delivered a fiery speech at a timber rally in Libby, Montana, sponsored by People for the West!. He told the audience that proposed wilderness accords would gut the area of jobs and accelerate social ills. The proposals, he said, would lock up the land "for goddam ever" and cause 30-percent

unemployment in the timber community. "And along with that comes wife batterment, child molestation and all the rest of it," he said. "Now do you think that the environmentalists give a damn about the fact that kids are going to be molested as a result of this?" Winters acknowledged that tapping the emotions of people facing the loss of their jobs or their land is an important organizing tool.⁸⁴

Pulpit-pounding tactics -- designed to strike emotional chords among listeners worried over their jobs and futures -- are typical of Wise Use activists. Randy Snodgrass, a lobbyist with the Washington, D.C. office of the Audubon Society, has charged that organizations such as People for the West! use "hate, hysteria, crudeness and the threat of violence" to push their agenda.⁸⁵ In areas where there is already an edgy fear and anxiety because of economic woes, this kind of tactic manipulates people's emotions and generates desperate anger. Polarizing issues and offering little substance does not bring long-term solutions, but often results in increased support for the groups employing such an approach. By advocating extreme positions, however, Wise Use sets up the local citizens it recruits for disappointment.

In Montana, People for the West! and other industry-supported groups have a significant impact on hard-pressed local communities like Libby, and other high unemployment areas in the northwest of Montana. Although they may represent legitimate opinions, they often emotionalize the debate by presenting unsubstantiated information and raising false issues. They are particularly adept at giving oversimplified answers to multiple complex problems in order to stir up people with economic troubles

or related difficulties.

Deb Erickson of the Kootenai Wildlands Alliance said the fundamental problem with People for the West! and other Wise Use groups is that, "They have no limits, no qualms about lying, no sense of decency, and lots and lots of money."⁸⁶ Above all, it is clear that their inflammatory rhetoric is designed specifically to play upon communities' fears and insecurities, create widespread hatred and hostility towards environmentalism, and obscure the real causes and/or possible solutions to resource-based economic problems.

Selling the "Grassroots" Image

The back page of a People for the West! newsletter (December 1995/January 1996) features a membership solicitation containing a large photo of woman in front of a field of downed, piled trees at a timber site. The woman apparently is a logger from California. Below the photo her caption reads:

I AM People for the West! As a logger, I know that land management decisions based on emotion and hype lead to lost jobs, shattered communities, and economic and social instability. Through PFW! I am linked with thousands of other concerned citizens from all walks of life throughout America who are willing to get involved to protect our heritage of land access and property rights. We'd like you to join our grassroots effort -- become part of a winning team!

Environmentalists are deeply troubled by the fact that the Wise Use Movement has launched successful campaigns to defend such wide-ranging industries as mining, grazing, and logging and have fought to open public lands to resource exploitation; to defeat growth management controls; to elect and recall public officials; and to eliminate regulatory restrictions on business practices, among others. What is even more alarming

is that such activities have, in many cases, been “sold” to the mainstream public as genuine citizen uprisings intended to achieve “reasonable, balanced” environmental policies that allow for continued economic development.

So far, efforts to discredit Wise Use activities as highly orchestrated political maneuvers which promote short-term economic benefit have not fared so well with the public and the media. An important reason for Wise Use’s political success is that its grassroots members have learned to play the game environmentalists have worked to master. The National Coalition for Public Lands and Natural Resources claims to have written the book on effective national grassroots organizing. The organization began its People for the West! campaign by building up local chapters one at a time in every corner of the West, and has recently begun to make inroads in the Midwest as well (See Appendix E).

The chapters’ local strength grew with membership, their national strength increased the minute they decided to call themselves People for the West!. As *People for the West!* put it, “Now, as new community groups catch fire and begin putting heat on those who would run over them with misguided environmental zeal, the chapters are settling in for the long haul. Let no one from the Sierra First Audubon Earth Wilderness Unlimited Granola Society ever misread the West again!”⁸⁷

People for the West! has established itself as one of the most influential Wise Use groups in the nation. With substantial corporate backing, PFW! has organized rural westerners with petition drives, rallies, protests, parades, public meetings, letter-writing

campaigns, and other events in an effort to head off environmental regulations that are viewed as a threat to economic security. They have built coalitions with other anti-environmental groups in an attempt to use the environmentalists' practice of networking, which links people with similar goals and interests. People for the West! has even created a classroom curriculum expounding the tenets of the Wise Use Movement.

Their effectiveness at mobilizing is due, in large part, to their highly organized information network. Political action committees within each state track legislation and policy that affect the use of public land. When a key issue is threatened, either locally or nationally, People for the West! puts out an action alert to members or activates phone trees to urge citizens to call, fax or write letters to the appropriate people or offices. Like most environmental groups, they also use direct mail, public education, outreach programs, promotional videotapes, workshops, boycotts, lobbying events, lawsuits, and legislation. The group's monthly newsletter, *People for the West!*, boasts one of the largest circulations among anti-environmental publications, claiming twenty thousand subscribers.

In 1995, People for the West! headquarters in Pueblo, Colorado generated more than fifty "calls to action," providing members with the latest information about important pending congressional legislation. This resulted in more than 25,000 telephone calls placed to decision-makers by its members from all across the West and Midwest. PFW! members not only write letters, attend rallies, and call lawmakers -- they also present their arguments before various committees. In 1995, the group's members gave

testimony of their personal involvement in natural resource issues at more than 2,000 local, state, and federal hearings.⁸⁸

At the heart of PFW!'s organizing strategy is the belief that public land users need to communicate with legislators. They insist that their supporters must work to convince elected officials that they are the "silent majority" who have joined forces to present the human side to the political equation. People for the West! labels its opposition as "outsiders" who want to totally restrict access and development of public lands "without regard for the companies, people or communities whose survival is dependent on those lands." By letting legislators know that they refuse to "allow any more destruction of their lifestyles, their local economies and the future of their nation," they hope to force the adoption of a "people-oriented, balanced approach" to federal land use.⁸⁹

The grassroots component of the campaign has not gone unnoticed on Capitol Hill. For example, instead of resource companies sending in just the industry representatives to lobby elected officials, an effective strategy of People for the West! is to send in teachers, doctors, mill workers, and other "average folks" to put a human face on the issues.⁹⁰

Manipulating the Media

While it is the leadership of People for the West! who actively work to guide legislative action and national public opinion in favor of public lands multiple use, the members of local chapters are encouraged to make sure that the group's activities are reflected in the press. They are also told to protect the spirit, intent, and image of the

campaign in the news media.

PFW! puts a great deal of effort into holding rallies and demonstrations that attract media attention and magnify the campaign's support. In addition to promoting the group's activities, People for the West! attempts to answer criticism directed at the campaign in letters-to-the-editor, radio broadcasts, community forums, and so on. Every chapter is also encouraged to have in place a media committee, or so-called "truth squad" to aggressively answer perceived negative and inaccurate press.

Joe Snyder, PFW! communications director, explained the importance of utilizing the media to advance the group's cause. "Preservationists always react immediately to either good press about PFW! or bad press about themselves," he said. "That's why they've been winning the public relations fight. Let's reverse this!" When negative press about People for the West! occurs, individual members at the local level are instructed to take the following steps to counter the bad publicity:⁹¹

- 1. The chapter or coalition's "truth squad" should immediately respond, preferably within the same day, but definitely within two days of the negative press.*
- 2. Members should feel free to contact Joe Snyder in Pueblo for information or help in responding.*
- 3. Responses should be short, to the point, and positive. The key words that aren't being stressed enough by members are: MODERATE, NONPARTISAN, and BROAD-BASED.*

The aim of Wise Use groups like People for the West!, in misleading the news media and the public, is to portray their campaigns as a wave of grassroots support in hopes of winning acceptance as a mainstream citizens movement. Their populist

message -- get the federal government off our backs and stop their radical environmental allies from disrupting our lives -- resonates with people fearful of economic dislocation. Their message is crafted to appeal to the fears of local residents; then they use that fear to earn headlines. With their media attention has come political clout, as officeholders come to pay attention to activities that appear to be expressions of interest from a wide array of ordinary people. Their particular style of "stealth" tactics, designed to dominate public discussion with a narrow, self-interested point of view, has been effective.

PART IV. Triumph or Tragedy

Losing "Green" Ground

In the 1980s, the environmental movement became soft, corporate, and politically ductile. What it gained in techno-analysis, lawyerly clout, and legislative access, it lost in vision, common sense, and, in the end, effectiveness.

- Dave Foreman, Confessions of an Eco-Warrior

It's not easy being green.

- Kermit the Frog

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the environmental movement scored tremendous victories with the passage of unprecedented legislation like the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water and Air Acts, and National Environmental Policy Act. Since then, the principle strategy of the big environmental organizations has been to stop the weakening of old laws, not to pass new ones. They have become managers, forgetting their roots as organizers.

The Wise Use Movement has obviously learned from past mistakes. Careful observations of grassroots environmental groups has guided the land use crusade to a new course of action. Noting that their past failures lacked popular support, industry groups like People for the West! mimic many of the tactics of their opposition, often very effectively. They circulate petitions and pack meetings. They write letters to the editors of local newspapers vilifying regulations and environmentalists. They stage public protests to spread their message. All of the above activities are intended to carefully craft the image of a mobilized organizing effort spurred on by genuine citizen outcry.

Beyond basic organizing tactics, the Wise Use Movement has also borrowed from

environmentalists' more sophisticated methods of swaying public opinion to its cause. These include the use of computerized mailing lists, direct-mail funding pitches, multi-media advertising, political action committees, political endorsements, and so on.

The powerful, Washington, D.C.-based environmental groups, with millions of dues-paying members and hundreds of professional staffers, including lawyers, lobbyists, and public relations people, in turn, use many of the same techniques as the private-sector lobbies. Not surprisingly, the argument that environmental groups are driven by the same self-interests as major industrial lobbies is too often accepted as fact not only by the Washington political and media establishments, but by much of the public as well.

Environmentalists have typically ignored accusations that their movement is well-healed and centrist. Time and time again, they have refused to stand and defend themselves, to make their case that environmental groups do not share a level playing field with resource lobbyists and industry groups. The fact is, nonprofit environmental advocacy structures pale in comparison to the political pressure and financial reserves commodity interests can bring to bear on issues. It is therefore wrong to consider them as just competing special interests, especially when one stops to consider whose interests they really represent.

The Wise Use Movement has been able to rally populist opposition precisely because many of its charges are true. The mainstream environmental movement is somewhat elitist, highly paid, detached from people, indifferent to the working class, and a firm ally of big government. Once revered and feared as the most effective public

interest movement in America, the environmental movement is now perceived by many as just another well-financed and cynical special interest.⁹² Unfortunately, the environmental movement, more often than not, opts to “preach to the choir” rather than appeal to the angry and confused masses, and repair its bruised reputation. It remains to be seen whether environmentalism can regain its once-heralded status as a highly effective social movement.

Wise Use's Fatal Flaws

You know, you look at the (Wise Use) agenda, and it says, “Graze everywhere, mine everywhere, log everywhere. The only good endangered species is a dead endangered species.” And I really can't believe that that is what the American people that they claim they represent are in favor of.

- Bruce Hamilton, Sierra Club

Without a doubt, organizations like People for the West! have struck a powerful chord among rural westerners. A lot of these folks would have to be considered “grassroots” people who feel threatened by changes happening in their communities. Rather than dismiss their concerns, the environmental movement needs to take them seriously and work to develop a viable response to these complex socio-economic problems. While doing so, environmentalists also must learn to recognize and take advantage of the inherent weaknesses of the Wise Use Movement.

A major chink in the movement's armor is that one does not have to look very far beneath the surface of most Wise Use groups to find out that what they really want is to exploit natural resources for private financial gain. When this fact is known most people become understandably incensed. Greed makes for a weak foundation for any

movement, political or otherwise, and this may be the harbinger of doom for Wise Use. The implication for environmentalists is that sticking with an uncompromising message that there is simply no economic or moral justification for the commercial exploitation of public lands is a safe bet for the long term.

In the short term, the Wise Use Movement suffers from a serious internal weakness. Because the conglomeration of groups within the broad spectrum of the movement are made up of many different interests -- often united only in their contention with environmentalists -- an approach based on a "divide and conquer" strategy may be effective for environmentalists. By focusing on the extreme positions of the movement, for instance, it may be possible to exploit the ideological divisions among the movement's various interests, such as ranchers versus miners, or off-road vehicle users versus hunters. In any case, environmentalists must find a way to enhance their credibility and appeal to those who might otherwise seek solace with the Wise Use crowd.

Fighting Fire With Fire

It is ironic that the Wise Use Movement has had most of its success by painting environmentalists as "extremists." People for the West! says, for instance, that anyone who wants to protect the environment is really out to prohibit all mining, logging, grazing and outdoor recreation. They claim that environmental protection costs jobs. In the past, environmentalists have unwittingly played into the hands of their foes by taking a defensive posture in response to such Wise Use attacks. The anti-environmental

movement might not be as effective if only environmentalists would re-assert themselves, and be clear about why they believe their cause is worth fighting for.

Contrary to Wise Use claims, public opinion polls consistently show that the majority of Americans value a healthy environment, and support efforts to protect and conserve natural resources.⁹³ Based on this information, an all-out offensive by environmental groups could undermine Wise Use's position by redefining the public's understanding of the situation. Environmentalists could counter Wise Use's half-truths and distortions by attempting to tackle the tough issues that plague the environmental movement time and time again. For example, environmentalism needs to shed its association with job loss -- a legitimate and complex issue that should not be overlooked or avoided. Activists should therefore take a lead role in the public debate to try to dispel the myth that regulations mean choosing between jobs and the environment.

There is a clear and rational economic argument that can be tied to most aspects of resource conservation. The task at hand is to find it and utilize it so as to attract individuals in search of positive solutions back to the environmental movement. The next logical step, then, is to formulate a message that will appeal to average Americans, one that stresses shared values and includes economic growth.⁹⁴ Like the Wise Use Movement, environmentalists should describe the effects of natural resource policies as they see them -- better air and water quality, sustainable economies, and more citizen participation in government decision-making. No matter what Wise Use groups would have people believe, environmentalists should stick to their positions, be proud of their

cause, and refuse to back down.

Dollars and Sense

Most western communities no longer depend on the traditional extraction industries. In fact, a single segment of the new economic engine -- the wealth from retired people settling in the West -- now exceeds the income from mining, logging and ranching together. If recreation, tourism and relocated businesses are added to the pot, they far outstrip employment opportunities and revenues generated by resource-based industries.⁹⁵

There are now many western communities where the economic base is mainly dependent on the beauty of the surrounding wildlands, and this change in economic imperative has created a new subculture in parts of the West. For the first time, there are substantial numbers of people in the West who are not directly dependent on resource exploitation for their sustenance. This new western population group has introduced a previously rare value system to the region, one which places the highest value on natural surroundings that have been very little or not at all affected by the acts of humans.⁹⁶ This new point of view has led to ever-growing conflicts between old exploitive interests and the more recent urban-based, conservation-minded residents.

Wise Use advocates have been winning the public relations battle by strongly appealing to the West's deep cultural biases. The movement's organizers recognized the long-standing resentment in traditional rural western communities toward the new "settlers" and their "preservationist" attitudes. The simmering resentment of people

involved in mining, logging, grazing, motorized recreation, and other activities has guaranteed People for the West! a solid political base of support. As a result, they have convinced a significant segment of the population that making a living from the ground is more reliable, productive, and morally uplifting than a job in government or the service industry. Even today, loggers and cowboys are romantic figures, honored as icons of the majestic past.

With the rush to address the many “environmental needs” of the West, environmentalist have been guilty of writing off the working class constituency Wise Users claim to represent. They have not focused enough on economic issues, the major motivation behind anti-green groups. Naturally, some people are scared about their uncertain economic future. Environmental organizations must find ways to help these people, to address the real problems of economically distressed communities, or they cannot expect to gain their support. The environmental movement, therefore, should invest more in economic analysis of natural resource issues and take control of the “jobs versus environment” debate.

Armed with sound economic figures, environmentalists could then go on the offensive and challenge faulty claims by People for the West! that traditional industries must be saved in order to save the West’s economy. The economy is more vibrant than ever, and the West is experiencing more growth than it can handle, regardless of what industry groups would have people believe. It is much more the case that high quality living is attracting people and businesses.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the notion that environmental

regulation is the source of rural economic distress is mythical. Instead, mergers, buyouts and taxes cause more job loss than air quality and logging regulations.⁹⁸

There are reasonable ways to resolve economic and environmental conflicts, and the spotlight should stay focused on legitimate issues and solutions. There are forums where open-minded dialogue may bridge the gap that has for so long separated those who advocate environmental protection and those that make their living from the development of natural resources. It is clear that Wise Use tactics of fear and intimidation offer nothing worthwhile to discussion on how to do the best for ourselves and the future with what we have. Certainly there are constructive means of resolving long-term resource management conflicts, and it is time that environmentalists set about finding reasonable solutions.

Playing to Win

Another serious weakness of the Wise Use Movement is that its affiliated groups use half-truths and distortions to polarize rather than solve tough resource issues. Their paid organizers are usually less adept at offering viable alternatives to suffering communities than they are at provoking hate. This gives environmentalists the opportunity to cripple the movement by beating it on the issues, thus eroding its political base.

The key to diffusing the anti-environmental backlash is to pick specific battles, not to try to fight every one. This is exactly what People for the West! chose to do when it organized around the 1872 Mining Law. Fighting against reform efforts and for

retention of the mining law is still a Wise Use flagship. For this reason, environmental groups need to work harder than ever to defeat People for the West! and other anti-environment groups on this issue.

Besides directly confronting the corporate forces driving environmental destruction, they can do this by putting their own message out. For example, with the mining issue, environmentalists should note that while the industry will continue to play a part in Montana's future, its labor revenue represents only seven percent of the state's non-agricultural labor income and its historic boom-bust economic cycle is not central to a stable economy.⁹⁹ In the long-term, the state will be dependent on the protection of its precious natural resources, maintaining clean air and water, and preserving the scenic beauty that few places still possess. The public must be made to understand that preserving these remaining resources, not extracting them, is Montana's best hope for a better future, both in terms of economic stability and quality of life.¹⁰⁰

Turning the Tide

We will not quit until people are written firmly back into the environmental equation. We will only grow stronger as preservationists run scared -- they have had their way for a long time and aren't used to any resistance. Let them figure out how to get around us for a change.

- Joe Snyder, People for the West!

An underlying strategy of People for the West! is to emphasize the need to go on the offensive instead of the defensive on issues, to act instead of being merely reactionary. Perhaps this is a good lesson for the environmental movement as well. After all, corporations and the industry groups they support have a definite economic stake in the

outcome of natural resource issues. Environmental organizations should direct some of their energy toward playing this fact up to the American people, so as to clearly portray themselves as “the guardians and protectors of the public good.” Environmentalists especially need to appeal directly to the people who latch on to the Wise Use Movement as a last gasp of hope against a rapidly changing society, one that is more frightening and harder to accept than the memories of a world they used to know.

The Truth Hurts

In order to undercut the movement’s fragile hold on the populace, it is important to investigate and expose the truth behind Wise Use, to scratch and dig deep enough to find out who these groups are, their legislative and political goals, their methods of action, where they get their money, and so on.¹⁰¹ The connection must be made that since corporations bankroll Wise Use groups, industry interests, not those of local citizens, are the real driving force behind the movement’s agenda. When possible, it should be stressed that many of these corporations are foreign-owned, a fact which contradicts the All-American, grassroots image Wise Use groups put across. To facilitate such efforts, environmental organizations should cooperate and share information in order to bring to light the nature of Wise Use, and the inconsistencies inherent in the movement.

As the Wise Use Movement’s true motives, methods and funding become clear, environmental groups are fighting back, publishing handbooks, holding workshops and elevating public awareness on this issue. This is a logical step, and one that cannot be emphasized too much. Environmentalists should continue to focus on outreach and

education efforts, in addition to forming coalitions to battle Wise Use influence. But more than this, they should develop a simple and consistent message to firmly characterize the movement for what it is -- a veiled corporate attempt to plunder public resources for private profit.

It's Not Big Government, But Big Corporations, Stupid!

The historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. correctly noted that while the assault on national government is represented as returning power to the people, the withdrawal of the national government does not transfer power to the people. It transfers power to the great rival of the national government, indeed the great cause of the rise of "big government" -- the large corporation and the business community.¹⁰² Corporations bank on this fundamental premise, and it underlies the efforts of the Wise Use Movement.

Criticism of Wise Use should be framed around its manipulation of and disregard for "the little people" -- hardworking, honest, Americans. It must be made evident that the industry is hiding behind populist claims, that monied interests are capitalizing on frustrations with government by encouraging and even coercing people to speak out for free market libertarian policies that benefit the corporate class, and then amplifying those voices in the media.

Environmental activists must convince the public that Wise Use is about getting average citizens to speak up in a way that helps big industry, and that the movement's underdog image is a sham. In essence, the few people who become active with Wise Use are being used to do the work of big industry, and in the process, they are being duped

into arguing against their own best interests. For instance, strip mining and clear-cutting industries benefit when small property owners argue against environmental regulations. Environmentalists, therefore, need to be pro-active in discrediting the Wise Use Movement as a smokescreen to obscure the intolerance and greed which have always threatened families and communities.

Back to the Future

Common sense suggests that one of the most effective ways to counter Wise Use activity is effective organizing, designed to reach out to communities and educate citizens on environmental issues. Therefore, the environmental movement must take serious steps to initiate a widespread and wholesale return to the grassroots, where it originated and had most of its success. Because the future of American environmentalism lies with local players, who are more likely to be trusted and respected within their communities, more emphasis on activism “at the ground level” would provide a healthy rejuvenation to the movement, and better serve the localities facing direct conflict from Wise Use groups.

The fact remains that environmentalism is most effective in bringing about fundamental change as a moral force outside the system. National environmental groups should facilitate this welcome phenomenon by taking a step back and acting only as a link between local campaigns. Above all, “outside” groups should avoid pushing their national agenda onto local affiliates and other grassroots groups. More money and effort should be shifted from the large, D.C.-based, environmental organizations, which have become like institutions, back to small cities, towns and rural areas.

Once in place, stronger local groups could identify examples of the people and places that have been directly affected by the anti-environmental practices of corporations, industry groups, and other monied interests. A technique that has been beneficial to the Wise Use Movement is the use of personal testimony to “put a face” on every instance of abuse caused by government regulations. Environmentalism needs to re-establish its roots in the heartland of America, and learn to tell the media and the public its own personal stories about the people and communities who have been affected by environmental issues in a positive way.¹⁰³

Building Bridges

Naturally, when it comes to forging alliances against Wise Use, existing networks should be used to involve the environmental community in an all-out campaign to counter the movement. Wise Use finds most of its success in local battles, exploiting the “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) phenomenon. Therefore, when possible, aggressive grassroots counter-action should be directed by local groups, particularly in communities which are directly affected by Wise Use activity.

An important base of support could also be developed through extensive coalition-building activities. Common bonds can be found among any groups potentially at risk from Wise Use objectives in order to present a stronger, more united front against the movement’s campaigns. At the community, state, and regional levels, for instance, effective coalitions can be forged to unite labor, minorities, and the poor with environmentalists. The key is to find the bottom line and build the movement from the

bottom up.

Environmental organizations should also look to non-traditional groups, such as womens' and religious groups when forging alliances against Wise Use. For example, Pope John Paul II recently spoke out for the environment, saying that while the Bible acknowledges humanity's privileged position on the earth, this status "is not authority to lord over it, even less to devastate it," he said. He also stated that Scripture teaches us "to use but not abuse" because "the rewards are not just for now but for the future."¹⁰⁴

Likewise, environmentalists should try to work out compromises, when possible, with groups often broadly painted as opponents of environmentalism, including agricultural organizations, recreationists, and sportsmen. Because these groups often have goals in common with conservationists, there always exists the threat of localized agreements between labor and environmentalists or farmers and government resource agencies that might undermine the fever of indignation and outrage needed to fuel the anti-environmental movement's growth.

Finally, environmental groups should try to reach out directly to the actual citizen members who supposedly make up the rank and file of the various Wise Use groups. These people usually feel alienated from decision-making processes that determine the quality of their lives. Wise Use groups use this alienation to recruit members, providing a false sense of security for rural people and exploiting their legitimate desires in a calculated effort to further corporate agendas. People want to influence their own economic futures and they should join organizations to do that. Given the chance, most

people would probably rather join a truly democratic, grassroots citizens group.

Environmental groups must find a way to offer such an alternative.

Degreasing the Wheels

At the core of any campaign to win greater acceptance and mainstream support for environmental positions is the realization that our political system affords a distinct advantage to those with large monetary resources. A major reason why Wise Use's political power outweighs its actual numbers is through political contributions, particularly campaign contributions to politicians in the West. It seems democracy no longer works in Washington and state capitols where corporate special interests control the political purses that put candidates into office and keep them there. Environmental organizations cannot and never will be able to compete evenly against well-funded industries that have the financial means to influence legislators through campaign contributions.

Political action committees (PACs) seem like nothing more than legalized forms of bribery, with the expressed intention of gaining access to and influence over key political decision-makers. This may explain why there is often a correlation between the voting records of many congressional legislators and their financial supporters. People for the West!, for example, keeps close tabs on federal politicians, and scores those with 100 percent approval ratings as "patriots" (See Appendix F).

It is not surprising that these so-called "patriots," many of whom happen to be the Wise Use Movement's staunchest political supporters, accept and receive large amounts

of money from industry-funded political action committees. Because environmental PACs simply do not have the financial means to match such influence -- influence “bought and paid for” through PAC contributions -- a key aspect of any strategy to counter Wise Use’s legislative influence is campaign finance reform.

People for the Worst!

Our political strength lies in the number of people we attract. When in place, in the years to come, our pro-multiple use efforts could well rival that of our detractors, the Sierra Club or the Wilderness Society. It's the collective muscle we need to push back for a sane and wise use of our public lands.

- Bill Grannell, People for the West!

How, I wonder, can a nation that claimed this sacred and beautiful land in the name of God love the Creator but not the creation? How can a “culture” survive when its very existence is defined by the consumption of the finite resources that give it identity?

- Debra Thunder, journalist

Legislatures across the United States consider economic impact bills that would make almost any state regulation of environmental protection impossible. Full-page advertisements in newspapers across the West claim that endangered species protection will destroy private property and lead to catastrophic job losses. Resource-based companies send bus-loads of workers to public hearings on company time. The emergence of unified and organized opposition has alarmed most environmentalists, who see the Wise Use Movement as a threat to the gains they have made over the last few decades.

Polarized, emotionally charged debates about the use and protection of natural resources have replaced rational discussions based on ethics and science. The fear, anger

and powerlessness felt by many people in rural, natural resource-dependent communities have been tapped and channeled into action by a force directly opposed to what environmentalism stands for. The short-term effects are staggering -- the conservation community is reeling from the shock of being used as the scapegoat for the economic decline of commodity-based industries.

From a long term perspective, however, perhaps the Wise Use Movement has actually benefitted environmental activists by getting their attention, something that has needed to happen to their stagnating movement for a long time. Indeed, this startling wake-up call offers a chance to heed the lessons brought forth by the anti-environmental movement's alarming victories, and rally an effective response. The Wise Use "blitzkrieg" may have initially resulted in a "green" Dunkirk, but now is not the time to cower, complain and collapse; it is time to educate, organize and act. It is time for a different kind of D-Day, the environmental equivalent of a Normandy Invasion.

Getting "Wise" to Wise Use

In the debate over the use of public lands, perhaps it was inevitable that commodity-based industries would finally get "wise." People for the West! is one such example of a well-disguised front group for industry, using the guise of a genuine grassroots campaign to further corporate interests. Like other characteristic Wise Use groups, PFW! is a reflection of its environmental counterparts, but at the core of this political phenomenon is an extractive industry-supported campaign designed to prevent any meaningful dialogue between competing interests in the rural West.

To be certain, People for the West! -- instilled with the belief that victory lies in numbers, and numbers can be bought with money -- has enjoyed some notable successes in Montana and elsewhere. There is no question that their contentious approach has influenced public lands management in the way of policy decisions and legislation. It seems that, as far as Montana's situation is concerned, the natural resource controversy may have reached a crossroads. Adversaries can either re-arm and prolong the divisive, unproductive battle, or they can drop the rhetoric and sit down at the negotiating table to draw up reasonable compromises. Although the latter is clearly a better solution, no immediate end to hostilities seems apparent.

Now that Wise Use groups are reorganizing, grooming new leadership, and forming broader coalitions to prepare for a sustained campaign of attrition over environmental and natural resource issues, the role of People for the West! is even more significant. The group is leading the charge in terms of attempting to transform the anti-environmental movement from a reactive and defensive guerilla campaign to a proactive, offensively-based political movement. As PFW's hard-core "fire and brimstone" approach evolves into a focus on tactics and strategy, there is little doubt that their efforts will contribute to the maturing of the Wise Use Movement.

The principle agenda of People for the West! is to preserve the status quo -- that is, primarily, the 1872 Mining Law, low fees for public lands ranching, and large-scale timber operations. Like the national anti-environmental movement in general, the group's aim is to destroy the gains made in protecting the nation's natural resources, a

mission that is unacceptable, and a message that rings hollow to most Americans.

Concerned activists and organizations must stand united against any efforts to destroy environmental health.

Final Assessment

It is uncertain whether anti-environmental groups, concerned mostly with maintaining the flow of money into industry, possess the emotional commitment to rally grassroots support in the long run. Regardless, well-financed, politically well-connected, and strategically sophisticated, chapter-based entities like People for the West! bear watching.

There is a term to describe the kind of corporate grassroots organizing that People for the West! and other Wise Use groups specialize in. When a grassroots program involves the manufacturing of public support for a point of view through means of deception, it is known as “astroturf” organizing. Anti-environmental groups have realized that if they do not have a genuine grassroots motivation, or at least the appearance of one, the odds of winning the political game are seriously diminished. So the purpose of this type of organizing is not to get more Americans involved in the political system, but to influence legislative policy. Wise Use guru Ron Arnold explained the essence of this strategy at a timber conference in 1991:

A pro-industry citizen activist group can do things industry can't. It can form coalitions to build real political clout. It can be a convincing advocate for industry. It can evoke powerful archetypes such as the sanctity and virtue of family and the importance of patriotism. It can use the tactic of intelligent attack against environmentalists, taking the battle to them instead of forever responding to their initiatives. And it can turn the public against

your enemies.

More than 2,000 years ago, Aristotle recognized that with democracy comes competing sectors within society that have conflicting interests. He realized that society was best served if the public could choose from a wide range of contending arguments. For this reason, this Ancient Greek philosopher believed that people should be trained in the art of communication and persuasion -- "rhetoric." This way each person would be able to recognize manipulation and deception on the part of those using rhetoric. Today, rhetoric is still used to enlighten the public, but more often it seems it is used to mislead the public. However, when people are educated about its techniques, rhetoric tends to lose its ability to deceive and manipulate.

In order to effectively counter the Wise Use Movement -- in Montana or anywhere else -- truth is still the most effective weapon against misinformation. The response to groups like People for the West!, then, must be to fully expose to the public the ulterior motives of the group's blatant corporate-sponsored attack on environmental protections and reforms. Indeed, constant vigilance remains the best watchword for protecting and advancing democracy, and for preventing Wise Use manipulation.

The environmental movement must continue to do what it has always done, only better, and hope that an informed public will spell disaster for so rapacious a movement as Wise Use (See Appendix G). It is not enough just to track and confront such groups, but also to play a role in recreating and revitalizing the environmental movement. In the end, the conservation community has little choice but to press on and keep the faith,

secure in the knowledge that victory belongs to those who care the most, and that the past can never be our future.

APPENDIX A

Edited Summary of "The Wise Use Agenda"

1. Initiate a public education project to demonstrate how "wise use" of the national forests and federal lands can reduce the federal deficit.
2. Develop the petroleum resources of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska.
3. Advocate the passage of an Inholder Protection Act, giving broader property rights to inholders, persons who own land within the borders or tangent to federal or state lands.
4. Support the Global Warming Protection Act, a misleading name for legislation which seeks to increase the young stands (i.e., removal of old growth stands) in National Forest lands.
5. Increase the harvesting of timber in the Tongass National Forest in Alaska.
6. Open all public lands to mining and energy production.
7. Assert states' sovereign rights in matters pertaining to water distribution and regulation.
8. Commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Forest Service by calling attention to the commodity use of forests and the homestead settlement of these areas in the early years of the agency.
9. Increase the harvesting of trees in national forests to promote "rural, timber-dependent community stability" through the Rural Community Stability Act.
10. Create a national timber harvesting system that allows for greater harvesting of timber on public lands.
11. Reorganize the National Park Service. This includes the implementation of Mission 2010, a 20-year construction program which would maximize concession stands and accommodations in National Parks. Remove entry limits and bring in private firms experienced in people moving, such as Walt Disney, to manage the parks.
12. Expand the window of time that a patent protects companies and individuals who develop new pest control products by excluding the time period spent testing the product.
13. Create the National Rangeland Grazing System to open more federal lands for

grazing.

14. Open all wilderness areas to motorized wheel chair access.
15. Support the enactment of a National Industrial Policy Act requiring all federal actions -- legislative and regulatory -- to include an economic impact statement.
16. Require greater specificity in the costs associated with actions by federal agencies.
17. Allow property owners to recover easements on property taken for railroad construction, once the railroads have been abandoned.
18. Amend and weaken the Endangered Species Act. The amendment would exclude "relic species in decline before the appearance of man," such as the California Condor.
19. Require parties that unsuccessfully challenge any development or economic action in court to pay damages to the developer.
20. Strengthen the claims to private rights on federal lands for mining, grazing, harvesting timber, et cetera.
21. Press for the enactment of the Global Resources Wise Use Act, which calls for the adoption of a pro-industry consideration in natural resource-use decisions.
22. Change the National Wilderness Preservation System to allow for commercial uses. Reorganize areas so that some are designated for partial development while others are allowed more extensive development.
23. Allow "wise use" groups standing to sue on behalf of industries that are threatened or harmed by environmentalists.
24. Use monies from the federal gasoline tax to create trails for off-road motorized vehicles.
25. Discontinue the Forest Service's policy of allowing some naturally occurring fires to burn, and introduce an active prevention system.

APPENDIX B

Resolution Supporting the "People for the West!" Campaign

Organization _____

Date _____

Resolution Supporting "People for the West!" Campaign

Whereas, the great wealth of the nation's natural resources are found on America's public lands, which are largely located in the Western United States, and

Whereas, multiple use assures beneficial utilization of public lands which afford states and local governments a necessary tax base by which to provide a majority of the funding for capital outlay projects, government services and for education, the most critical function of government, which ensures the well being and advancement of future generations, and

Whereas, the sensible development of these resources, under the federal policy of multiple use, makes a tremendous contribution to a vigorous economy, which is essential to the well being of all citizens, providing basic materials for housing, consumer goods, medical supplies, and other very important products needed by people, and

Whereas, the concept of multiple use is under extreme attack by those who either ignore or care little about the profound contributions made by public lands industries and, these individuals and their organizations are pressuring Congress to wholesale repeal federal Mining Laws, outlaw public lands grazing, stop timber harvesting, prohibit oil and gas development, and limit public recreation, and

Whereas, it's now time for citizens in the West to speak out in support of public lands' multiple uses including the sensible development of its vast natural resources,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the _____
strongly supports the *"People for the West!"* campaign, endorsing its efforts to build local community coalitions in western states advocating continued multiple use activities on public lands and, in the campaign's additional goal to gather signatures on a petition to be delivered to Congress affirming the above.

Signed: _____

(name of organization)

APPENDIX C

The Most Asked Questions About the 1872 Mining Law

1. Why is the law so important to miners? The law is important to everyone. As a sort of "constitution" for mining, it gives access to public lands and acts an incentive to any person bold, patient and skillful enough to seek out and find hidden valuable minerals, vital to us all. It protects the investments of money and hard work needed to find these minerals, especially for small miners, who do most of the prospecting and discover most of the vital minerals. The statute reflects traditional American values of a free market based on private enterprise.

2. Why do some people want to change the law? Many legislators attack the Mining Law because it's more politically popular than telling the powerful environmental lobby things it doesn't want to hear. Until the public realizes we can have wilderness, clean air and water, recreation, and all the economic uses of the public lands (and are willing to say so), the political currency of these groups will continue to rise. Well-meaning legislators, as well as members of the public, are often deceived into thinking we can only have one or the other. This deception is encouraged by radical environmentalists who want nothing less than the total abolition of mining and other multiple uses on all public lands. If misguided revisions are allowed, the endangered species of the 1990s may well be miners and the mining industry.

3. Is the law still needed -- haven't all the valuable minerals already been found? The prospectors of yesteryear would be surprised to learn that there were more mineral deposits in the hills than they ever dreamed. Today, modern miners have created a renaissance industry to discover and retrieve the minerals old timers left behind, using technology that would have never allowed such extraction before. Significant deposits are still being found in the West, and most minerals yet to be discovered will be found on federal public lands. The Mining Law is still the most effective tool needed for discovery.

4. What are the most important provisions in the law? The concepts of self initiation and security of tenure are the basic principles of the law. Self initiation means that anyone can search for minerals on public lands without having to buy permits or even notify federal officials. If deposits are found, security of tenure gives the miner a vested property right for the duration of mining, or allows the miner to obtain title to both mineral and surface rights.

5. What is a mining claim and who can stake one? Any citizen can stake a claim. When someone finds a spot that looks like a promising ore deposit, they don't buy the mineral rights, they "claim" them. Once claimed, the rights belong to the miner to explore, develop and process whatever he or she finds in the claim, as long it can be proven to the federal government each year that assessment work has been completed. Claims are recorded, and before mineral development begins, there is much paper work to be completed. Obtaining a claim is costly - the necessary exploration, surveys and legal costs can run as high as \$10,000 an acre.

6. Can you really buy public lands for \$2.50 to \$5 an acre under the law and do anything you want with it? Of course not. Only citizens who can prove they are making beneficial use of the land and are working diligently to improve it can receive a patent, or deed. Even then, it is difficult -- nearly half of all patent requests are turned down. The final fee to complete the ownership transfer follows years of work and thousands of dollars invested per claim.

7. Aren't there abuses to the current law? Yes, as there are in most other laws, but the answer lies not in creating more bureaucratic red tape, but in proper enforcement of the laws we have. Existing regulations already address the problem areas of mining and require such things, for example, as the posting of bonds that will pay clean up costs should the miner fail to do so. Land managing agencies such as the BLM and state departments of Fish, Wildlife and Parks need to properly administer these regulations.

8. Why doesn't the law provide for environmental protection, such as reclaiming the mine site and prohibiting pollution? The Mining Law, written in the days when the environment and reclamation weren't a concern to anyone, including miners, was not meant to be an environmental law. As our society became more consciencious over the years, the increased awareness was reflected in amendments to the original Mining Law. Additionally, scores of provisions exist today at both the federal and state levels to protect our water, wildlife, air and land -- there are some 37 federal laws to protect the environment, and most states have at least a dozen such laws of their own.

s so old, doesn't it need to change to fit modern times? There are benefits to having a The courts have sorted out the principles of the 1872 Mining Law, leaving guidelines that and predictable. Like the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, modifications have kept the p-to-date and viable. And like those historic documents, the Mining Law has successfully ose through the test of time.

APPENDIX D

Foreign-Owned Contributors to the National Coalition for Public Lands & Natural Resources

Following is a partial list of NCPLNR contributors that have traceable foreign ownership. Unless otherwise noted, the source for information is NCPLNR documents, and the source for foreign ownership is the *Dunn & Bradstreet Corporate Families and International Affiliates Directory*, 3 volumes, 1994 edition.

Asamera Minerals U.S. Inc., Washington -- Canadian

Owned by Olympia & York Resources Corporation, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Ownership is in a loop where each of two subsidiaries owns another, or each in a row successively owns the other, and the last one owns the first. In this case, Olympia & York Resources Corporation owns the loop of Asamera Minerals U.S. Inc. and Asamera Resources Inc.

Atlas Power Co., Western Division, Colorado -- British

Subsidiary of Imperial Chemical Industries PLC, London.

Bald Mountain Mine, Nevada -- Canadian

Owned by Placer Dome of Canada. NCPLNR's first president and chairman of its board of director was John Willson, CEO, Pegasus Corporation. After his term in office expired, he took the CEO position of Placer Dome mining company.

Boliden Resources Inc., Maine -- Swedish

Owned by Trelleborg A.B., of Trelleborg, Malmohus, Sweden.

Bond Gold Corporation -- Canadian

The company is located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

BP Minerals America, Utah -- British

No exact match with the name, but British Petroleum has dozens of subsidiaries, including BP America. Also, there is a reference in British Petroleum's listing that they sold much of their mineral activity to RTZ, also of London.

Cambior USA Inc. -- Canadian

Subsidiary of Cambior Inc., of Montreal.

Cominco American Resources Inc., Washington -- Canadian

Corona Gold Inc., Nevada -- Canadian

Subsidiary of Homestake Mining Inc. of San Francisco, but Corona is listed as a

Canadian-based subsidiary, not U.S.

Crown Butte Mines Inc. -- Canadian

Ownership of Crown Butte has been passed around a lot and currently rests with Hemlo Gold Mines Inc., of Toronto.

Equinox Resources Inc., Washington -- Canadian

Owned by Equinox Resources Ltd., Vancouver, British Columbia.

Franco-Nevada Mining -- Canadian

Owned by Franco-Nevada Mining Corporation, Toronto.

Galactic Resources -- Canadian

Listed in NCPLNR newsletters as from British Columbia. No listing in D&B.

Gold Fields Mining Corporation, Colorado -- British

Owned by Hanson PLC of London.

Golden Sunlight Mines Inc., Montana -- Canadian

Owned by Placer Dome.

Great Western Chemical, Montana -- Canadian

Their headquarters is in Portland, but D&B lists them as a foreign company in Delta, British Columbia.

Gulf Titanium -- Canadian

Listed in NCPLNR newsletters as from British Columbia. No listing in D&B.

Idaho Gold Corporation -- Canadian

Subsidiary of Bema Gold Corporation, of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Independence Mining Company -- Luxembourg

Owned by Minerals & Resources Corporation Limited S.A. of Luxembourg, via another subsidiary, Minorco USA Inc.

Kennecott Corporation -- British

Owned by Rio Tinto Zinc (formerly Rio Tinto Zimbabwe), otherwise known as RTZ.

Metalor, Massachusetts -- Swiss

Metalor is listed by NCPLNR as from North Attleborough, Massachusetts. That is the same location as Metalor USA Holding Corporation and Metalor USA Refining Corporation, both subsidiaries of the Zurich, Switzerland, conglomerate

called Schweizerischer Bankverein.

Minnova -- Canadian

Owned by Kerr-Addison Mines Ltd., of Toronto.

Montana Talc Company -- British

Owned by The Costain Group PLC, of London.

Nevada Goldfields Inc., Nevada -- Australian

Owned by Gwalia Consolidated Ltd., of Perth, Australia.

New Butte Mining Company, Montana -- British

Owned by Butte Mining PLC, of London.

Noranda, Colorado -- Canadian

Noranda Mining Company is the parent company, from Toronto. Noranda is heading a consortium of mining companies planning to develop the controversial New World Mine. The proposed mine would be a major operation located in close proximity to Yellowstone Park.

Peabody Holding Company -- British

Another arm of Hanson PLC, of London.

Pegasus Gold Corporation -- Canadian

This company, located in Vancouver, British Columbia, was one of the earliest and biggest financial supporters of the "People for the West!" campaign.

Placer Dome U.S. Inc., Nevada -- Canadian

Plexus Inc., Utah -- French

Owned by Total S.A., of France.

Rio Algom Mining Corporation, Oklahoma -- Canadian

Owned by Rio Algom Ltd., of Toronto.

Teck Corporation -- Canadian

Listed in NCPLNR newsletters as from British Columbia. No listing in D&B.

Viceroy Gold Corporation, Nevada -- Canadian

Owned by Viceroy Resource Corporation, British Columbia

APPENDIX E

People for the West!**15 reasons to join us**

1. **Biggest, Best.** *People for the West!* is the biggest, best organized and most effective organization of its kind in America. We have 120 active chapters, with 15,000 members throughout 50 states.
2. **Training.** Through local workshops we train our activists on how to get the best results, how Congress and the regulatory agencies operate, and how to maximize news media coverage of our message. We have full time field coordinators located throughout the West to provide assistance to our membership.
3. **Solidarity.** PFW serves as an umbrella group for a wide variety of interests-everyone from miners and county commissioners to people who use the public lands to pick mushrooms and ride snowmobiles.
4. **Nonpartisan.** Our friends can be found in the ranks of both Republican and Democratic parties. We are issue-oriented and support elected officials who share our point of view.
5. **Mainstream.** We avoid radical positions and statements that could limit our effectiveness. We advocate working within the system to affect change.
6. **Nonprofit.** We're not in the business to make money; all contributions go directly into the campaign.
7. **Issue Specific.** Our members have joined together because they understand their collective voice has political power. They willingly support issues of specific interest to any of our members.
8. **Visibility.** PFW has cultivated a good reputation with the news media and with legislators to ensure that our members are heard. We know how to work with the media to spread our message.
9. **Influence.** We have established a power base in federal, state and local governments. Our grassroots members are community leaders and many hold public office.
10. **Ability.** We are well known for our capacity to mobilize members and turn people out for important events. Our members know "the world is run by those who show up" and are committed to winning!
11. **Potential.** Millions of Americans are dissatisfied with politics as usual, as evidenced by the 1994 elections. The potential for this unique campaign to continue to grow in influence and power is unlimited.
12. **Proactive.** We don't wait for the issues to find us; we run out to meet them.
13. **Positive.** We are seeking to balance environmental protection with economic growth and will not be deterred by nay-sayers. We have enormous faith in our society's ability to solve environmental problems and enjoy a high standard of living. PFW members know we are changing America's future for the better!
14. **Motivation.** Our members want a strong economy, job security, and traditional individual rights. They write letters, call, fax, testify, rally, petition, attend seminars and public hearings, engage in public speaking and visit with decision-makers and news representatives. Our lobbying is done not in the halls of Congress but on the streets of America!
15. **Support.** The PFW headquarters staff has years of experience and supports the membership with strong leadership and a vision for the future.



Public Lands and Natural Resources

Protection and Economic Growth

APPENDIX F

People for the West! Congressional "Patriots"

The following list was provided in the *People for the West!* newsletter (October 1994). These elected officials received a 100 percent approval rating from PFW!, based on their votes on key legislative issues. It is interesting to note that political party affiliation was not indicated in the newsletter. Although PFW! insists that it is strongly nonpartisan, there is an obvious conservative, western bent to its primary political base of support.

U.S. SENATE

Robert Bennett (R-UT)	Pete Dominici (R-NM)	Connie Mack (R-FI)	Alan Simpson (R-WY)
Conrad Burns (R-MT)	Lauch Faircloth (R-NC)	John McCain (R-AZ)	Robert Smith (R-NH)
Dan Coats (R-IN)	Phil Gramm (R-TX)	F. Murkowski (R-AK)	Strom Thurmond (R-SC)
Thad Cochran (R-MS)	Orrin Hatch (R-UT)	Don Nickles (R-OK)	Malcom Wallop (R-WY)
Paul Coverdell (R-GA)	K.B. Hutchinson (R-TX)	Bob Packwood (R-OR)	
Larry Craig (R-ID)	Dirk Kempthorne (R-ID)	Larry Pressler (R-SD)	

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wayne Allard (R-CO)	Dave Camp (R-MI)	Joel Hefley (R-CO)	John Myers (R-IN)
Dick Armey (R-TX)	Mac Collins (R-GA)	Duncan Hunter (R-CA)	Ron Packwood (R-CA)
Spenser Bachus (D-FL)	Larry Combest (R-TX)	Tim Hutchinson (R-AR)	Richard Pombo (R-CA)
Bill Baker (R-CA)	Chric Cox (R-CA)	Janes Inhofe (R-OK)	Pat Roberts (R-KS)
Richard Baker (R-LA)	Philip Crane (R-IL)	Sam Johnson (R-TX)	Harold Rogers (R-KY)
Cass Ballanger (R-NC)	Michael Crapo (R-ID)	Jack Kingston (R-GA)	Lamar Smith (R-TX)
Bill Barrett (R-NE)	Tom DeLay (R-TX)	Jim Kolbe (R-AZ)	Bob Smith (R-OR)
Joe Barton (R-TX)	John Doolittle (R-CA)	John Kyl (R-AZ)	Chuck Stenholm (R-TX)
Helen Bentley (R-MD)	Bob Dornan (R-CA)	Jerry Lewis (R-CA)	Bob Stump (R-AZ)
John Boehner (R-OH)	David Drier (R-CA)	Jim Lightfoot (R-IA)	James Talent (R-MO)
Henry Bonilla (R-TX)	Bill Emerson (R-MO)	John Linder (R-GA)	Craig Thomas (R-WY)
Jim Bunning (R-KY)	Terry Everett (R-AL)	Don Manzullo (R-IL)	William Thomas (R-CA)
Dan Burton (R-IN)	Jock Fields (R-TX)	Al McCandless (R-CA)	B. Vucanovich (R-NV)
Steve Buyer (R-IN)	Rob Grams (R-MN)	Bill McCollum (R-FL)	Robert Walker (R-PA)
Sonny Callahan (R-AL)	Mel Hancock (R-MO)	Scott McInnis (R-CO)	Don Young (R-AK)
Ken Calvert (R-CA)	James Hansen (R-UT)	Buck McKeon (R-CA)	Bill Zeliff (R-NH)

APPENDIX G

Tips on How to Counter Wise Use Activity

Educate

- * Investigate the truth behind the Wise Use Movement. Research the origin and leadership of specific Wise Use groups, paying particularly close attention to the links between the group's issues of concern and the corporate interests providing financial support.
- * Utilize the media -- newspaper clippings, magazine articles, books, documentaries, etcetera -- to expose the true nature of the movement and to dispel Wise Use myths.

Organize

- * Beat Wise Use at "our own game" by activating an aggressive grassroots campaign, designed to increase public awareness of the issues and to mobilize effective support.
- * Network with other environmental groups and share resources and information as much as possible.
- * Form coalitions based on similar goals. Whenever possible, reach out to broad interests in order to cultivate potential allies. Seek common ground with opposing groups in an effort to undercut Wise Use's base of support.
- * Develop a message that most people can understand and accept. Base strategies around this appealing message and attainable goals.

Act

- * Focus campaigns on local battles/issues. Be proactive, not reactive.
- * Frame environmental issues in a positive light, being sure to emphasize objectives that benefit average Americans -- clean air and water, public health and safety, sustainable development, long-term economic stability.
- * Demonstrate grassroots support for the environmental movement. Publicize the results of polls and surveys that favor environmental protections. Work with the media to tell the environmental story.
- * Maintain consistent communication with and provide information to elected officials at all levels of government.
- * Confront Wise Use intimidation immediately and directly by asserting the facts of the issue(s) honestly, clearly and consistently.

NOTES

- 1 . Specifically, this includes the western states of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico.
- 2 . Increased mechanization was partly responsible for this decline .
- 3 . R. Rasker, N. Tirrell, and D. Kloefer. "The Wealth of nature: New economic realities in the Yellowstone region." *The Wilderness society* (February 1992): 36-39.
- 4 . According to the Montana Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism, there were approximately 7.9 million visitors to the state in 1995, with non-resident expenditures alone accounting for \$1.2 billion. The department estimates that visitation in Montana increases annually by an average of two percent. Tourism is the state's second largest industry behind agriculture.
- 5 . CDFE, based in Bellevue, Washington, is a core Wise Use organization. It is directed by Ron Arnold, a prominent Wise Use advocate and founder of the movement.
- 6 . Some industries represented were large mining, timber, and oil companies. Participants and supporters included major corporations such as Exxon, Chevron and Dupont, as well as a variety of other groups ranging from the National Rifle Association and the American Farm Bureau to real-estate developers and off-road motorcycle groups.
- 7 . John Krakauer, "Brown Fellas," *Outside* (December 1991): 69.
- 8 . Alan Gottlieb, *The Wise Use Agenda: The Citizen's Policy Guide to Environmental Resource Issues* (Bellevue, WA: The Free Enterprise Press, 1989). Unlike past attempts by resource extraction industries, which floundered due to internal inconsistencies, the agenda establishes a concrete legislative strategy and clearly sets out specific actions. These range from dramatic changes in wildlife management that allow for more commercial development of all kinds, to measures which deceptively appear to promote preservation. The impact of many items on the agenda is purposefully unclear, and this, in turn, obfuscates potential detrimental impact on the environment. It is important to note, however, that while the agenda establishes specific goals and attempts to bring together dissimilar groups, there is still a great deal of disparity within the movement.
- 9 . Information summarized from "The Political Agenda of the 'Wise Use' Movement: A Basic Guide for Grassroots Environmental Groups" (Washington, D.C.: Americans for the Environment, October 1993): pp. 8-11.
- 10 . For the purpose of this paper, only the latter tenet is discussed, as it applies directly to the mission of People for the West!. The demand for access to public lands, or unhindered "multiple use," forms the basic philosophy of the Wise Use Movement's public lands policy. In reality,

however, Wise Use objectives limit public access and do not promote economic stability. For example, the mining industry would close off public lands to recreational users, and the timber industry would limit access on public lands to hunters and hikers. The economic realities, distorted by the Wise Use agenda, are not the primary focus of this paper.

11 . "The Political Agenda of the 'Wise Use' Movement," pp. 20-21.

12 . The Sagebrush Rebellion refers to the efforts of conservative western state legislators during the late 1970s and early 1980s to transfer control of federally managed public lands to state governments. Many had privatization as their ultimate goal. The most outspoken champion of these efforts at the federal level was Reagan administration Interior Secretary James Watt.

13 . The Sagebrush Rebellion fell apart primarily because of internal conflict. Briefly, some factions within the movement sought absolute privatization of federal lands, others wanted state control and others were content with decreased regulation. Another major factor was that the courts supported public interests with the ruling that Nevada, and any other state, has no legal claim to the federal lands within its state boundaries. In addition, the Reagan administration dissipated some of the rebels' anger through decreased regulation, and other environmentally detrimental actions in support of resource-based industries.

14 . Aspects of the Wise Use Movement's political agenda that specifically relate to public lands policy include: opposition to the designation of any lands as wilderness areas; immediate logging of all old growth forests; and opening of any lands -- including wilderness areas and national parks -- to mineral and energy production.

15 . This Pueblo, Colorado-based nonprofit corporation is a 15-state coalition that claims to represent 350 groups. Associate memberships are sold for \$300 to \$1000 (based on the size of the group seeking membership) and board memberships are \$15,000. Formerly known as the Western States Public Lands Coalition, the group changed its name in 1994 to broaden its appeal to states in other regions of the country. Its 501(c)(6) tax-exempt status entitles the organization to lobby.

According to its 1989 Annual Report, the group is dedicated to changing public opinion and changing votes in Congress in favor of multiple use on all federal lands and in opposition to wilderness anywhere. It modeled the "People for the West!" campaign after its "Oregon Project," a grassroots campaign on behalf of the timber industry which gathered 170,000 signatures in 90 days on petitions in support of logging. Major timber interests financed the effort, but labor provided the foot soldiers to collect signatures. The project resulted in the state's elected officials supporting the forest products industry, leading to a compromise in Congress regarding the spotted owl and the harvesting of old-growth timber.

16 . Perhaps no area of public policy has been subjected to a more systematic assault by the 104th Congress than the environment. Since the Republicans gained a majority in Congress as a

result of the 1994 elections, environmental protection, public health and safety, and resource management have been among the policies most targeted by the party leadership. Beginning with the "Contract With America" in January 1995, and continuing through a slew of appropriations bills last December, the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives has sought to weaken, repeal and undermine laws that, over the past quarter century, have made America's air and water safer, reduced toxins in the environment, and preserved the nation's public lands. Worse, their changes would cost the taxpayers billions of dollars in lost opportunities to collect the real value of public resources such as water, timber, and minerals.

17. As reported in *The Boston Globe* (February 29, 1996), the current congressional assault on the nation's environmental laws has been poorly received by the public. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) conceded that his party had "mismanaged" the issue and promised a new Republican environmental strategy. "It will be Gingrich's unenviable job to bring his firebrands to moderation," the article states. It remains to be seen whether the Republican's new legislative strategy will reflect the public's sincere concern for the environment, or simply be a cosmetic approach to re-packaging natural resources issues.

18. Numerous committees in Congress, their Republican chairmen and committee members have launched an unprecedented attack on virtually every facet of environmental law. The Democratic staff of the Committee on Resources, House of Representatives, issued a report entitled *The Browning of America: The Republican Assault on the Environment - 1995* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1996). The report details the initiatives put forth during the first session of the Republican-dominated Congress against many of the most successful and popular environmental statutes of the last 25 years, as well as the Republican members' steady support for policies that grant billions of dollars in public assets to special interests.

19. Perry Backus, "Petition on public lands gathers support," *The Montana Standard* (November 8, 1990): A1.

20. Will Craig, "PFW! members successful in election bids," *People for the West!*, Volume 7, Number 11. (December, 1994): 3.

21. People for the West!, official petition (1990). The petition was finally delivered to Congress in 1993, short of its goal by 500,000 signatures.

22. This fact was highlighted by Don Judge, Executive Secretary of the Montana State AFL-CIO, in a July 1993 internal memorandum on the Wise Use Movement. In the memo, Judge acknowledged the existence of a grassroots element to groups like People for the West! To illustrate his point, he used the metaphor of a lawn on an abandoned lot and a lawn on a golf course. The lawn on the abandoned lot is scraggly, untended and barely surviving. The golf course lawn, in contrast, is seeded, fertilized, watered and groomed, and thriving. PFW! is very much like the golf course lawn: it's still a lawn (i.e., a "grassroots" effort), but it has been seeded, fertilized, watered and tended by corporate sponsors with a vested economic and political

interest.

23 . M.A. Stapleton, "The war over public lands: Multi-use movement grows in state," *The Great Falls Tribune* (Sunday, May 31, 1994): B1.

24 . Kate O'Callaghan, "Whose Agenda For America?," *Audubon* (September-October 1992): 84-87.

25 . David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens: The "Wise-Use" Movement, the New Right, and Anti-Environmental Violence* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994): 33.

26 . Eric Williams, "Western lands coalition starts organizing in state," *The Montana Standard* (May 16, 1990): A2.

27 . "Lands Commissioner calls for mining law reform," *The Montana Standard* (May 13, 1991): A3.

28 . Joe Snyder, "Rallying miners put heat on Rahall in Colorado," *People for the West!*, Volume 4, Number 7 (May 1, 1991): 1-4.

29 . Perry Backus, "Residents have mixed views on 'Vision' document," *The Montana Standard* (December 14, 1990): A1.

30 . Matt Gibson, "Vision document revisions planned," *The Livingston Enterprise* (January 24, 1991): A1.

31 . "Wave of opposition dooms 'Vision' plan," *People for the West!*, Volume 4, Number 3 (February 1, 1991): 2-3.

32 . "Document details allegations of administration conspiracy," *The Billings Gazette* (January 6, 1993): A4.

33 . Ibid.

34 . Lillian Herne, "Letter to the Editor: Montanans victimized," *The Billings Gazette* (March 3, 1991): B11.

35 . Subcommittee on Civil Service of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, U.S. House of Representatives, *Interference in Environmental Programs by Political Appointees: The Improper Treatment of a Senior Executive Service Official* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1993).

36 . "Document details allegations of administration conspiracy," *The Billings Gazette* (January 6, 1993): A4.

- 37 . "Gilpatrick heads grassroots group," *Lewistown News-Argus* (February 3, 1991): B1.
- 38 . Ibid.
- 39 . An amount less than half of the average fee charged by states for grazing on state-owned land.
- 40 . "Senate gives ranchers power - at a price," *Missoulian* (March 23, 1996): B2.
- 41 . At a time when Congress is slashing funds for many public services, Jeff Juel of The Ecology Center estimates that S-1459 will increase support to "welfare" ranchers on public lands by maintaining subsidies that cost American taxpayers up to \$500 million each year.
- 42 . All comments and information were derived from actual congressional activity as viewed on C-Span "Live," March 21, 1996. On that day, the Senate considered a bill (S-1459) to set policy for the grazing of domestic livestock on public lands.
- 43 . Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*, p.141.
- 44 . Ibid. pp.8-10.
- 45 . Ibid, pp.119-120.
- 46 . "Public lands fight creates new organizations," *Helena Independent-Record* (March 4, 1991): B1.
- 47 . Although the group's funding was almost exclusively from mining interests, supporters insist that is only because the major issue at the time was the mining law. People for the West! makes no bones about the fact that as new issues have developed -- such as opposing increased grazing fees on public lands and fighting for public access to timber, so too has its funding base expanded.
- 48 . At the time, People for the West! was heavily engaged in a campaign to garner support for the 1872 Mining Law, which was under consideration for major reform in Congress.
- 49 . IRS Form 990s, Western States Public Lands Coalition, 1988 - 1993; National Coalition for Public Lands & Natural Resources, 1994.
- 50 . PFW! communications director Joe Snyder telephone interview with author, March 14, 1996.
- 51 . "The Political Agenda of the 'Wise Use' Movement," p.8.
- 52 . Memorandum from Mineral Policy Center, Washington, D.C. (May 2, 1991).

53 . Kathy Cone, "The language of land-use conflict." *The Workbook*, Volume 17, Number 1 (Spring 1992): 4.

54 . O'Callaghan, "Whose Agenda For America?," pp. 87-90.

55 . IRS Form 990, 1992.

56 . The NCPLNR board cycles through members annually as part of its bylaws, and the officers always come from industry. Chairmen have exclusively been CEOs of large mining companies.

57 . Bill Lombardi, "Battle looms on mining bill: Industry, conservationists digging in for fight over 1872 law," *The Billings Gazette* (June 2, 1991): B3.

58 . Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*, p.123.

59 . Erin Billings, "Land use group settles in for the 'long haul,'" *The Montana Standard* (November 10, 1994): B4.

For more in depth analysis of the complex and often contentious relationship between Wise Use and organized labor, an excellent source is *Western Horizons*, a regular newsletter produced by the Portland-based Western States Center. This grassroots information network and the Montana State AFL-CIO sponsor a joint campaign, the "Wise Use Public Exposure Project," in an effort to organize a better environment for working people. Specifically, the project is designed to expose the corporate and ideological interests behind the Wise Use Movement and to assess the threat it poses to the political, economic and environmental health of the West.

60 . Tom Howard, "Labor, environmentalists oppose new group," *The Billings Gazette* (July 7, 1992): B2.

61 . Information based on an AFL-CIO internal memorandum, and supported by legislative director Pam Egan during a subsequent interview with the author, February 5, 1996.

62 . Barbara Grannell, "From the Director," *People for the West!*, Volume 6, Number 3 (February, 1993): 7.

63 . *By Hook or By Crook: Stealth Lobbying -- Tactics and Counter-strategies*, Advocacy Institute (Washington, D.C.: August 1995): 14.

64 . *Sunday Enterprise* (April 16, 1989). A Gallup Poll found that 93 percent of respondents had a "very favorable" or "mostly favorable" opinion of the American Cancer Society, compared to 26 percent for the Tobacco Institute, and 58 percent for the National Rifle Association.

65 . *By Hook or By Crook*, pp.15-17.

66 . Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*, p.9.

- 67 . Jay Hair, *National Wildlife* (October/November 1992): 30.
- 68 . An excellent guide to front groups is the annual publication, *The Greenpeace Guide to Anti-Environmental Organizations*, (Washington, D.C.: Real Story Books).
- 69 . *By Hook or By Crook*, p.17.
- 70 . John Lancaster, "Western industries fuel grassroots drive for wise use of resources," *The Washington Post* (May 16, 1991): B1.
- 71 . Scott McMillion, "Hired gun fires up pro-logging rally," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* (April 3, 1992): A1.
- 72 . "Right wing sprouts in montana," *Montana Family Union Voice*, Volume 3, Number 4 (April 1992): 2.
- 73 . "People for the West! Demonstrates That Grassroots Organizing is Succeeding," *The Pick & Shovel* (January 1992): 13.
- 74 . Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*, p.429.
- 75 . Ibid, p.9.
- 76 . On the more serious side, violent physical attacks on environmental activists have increased dramatically in recent years, as detailed by Helvarg's book.
- 77 . Ibid, p. 122.
- 78 . Lancaster, "Western industries fuel grassroots drive for wise use of resources," B7.
- 79 . Jeff Harris, "Making progress: The best is yet to come," *People for the West!*, Volume 8, Number 10 (December 1995/January 1996): 5.
- 80 . I am both repulsed and fascinated by Wise Use's success in playing fast and loose with facts when organizing support. In May 1993, while working as a Grassroots Coordinator for a nonprofit environmental organization, I attended a tree farmer's conference in Richmond, Virginia. The event was hosted by the state Farm Bureau, and featured a speaker claiming affiliation with the Wise Use Movement. This person skillfully played on the crowd's concerns about the economic impact of federal wetlands regulations, and used inflammatory rhetoric and here say to illustrate his points.

At one point in his diatribe against environmentalists, whom he labeled as "preservationists," he audaciously stated that most "green" activists are Buddhist, and that many of the women who belong to the movement are thespians. Surprisingly, a collective gasp of astonishment arose from the audience as people reacted to the speaker's ludicrous remarks. He

knew his audience well. The conference attendees were predominantly white males, middle-aged to elderly, conservative, religious, and not very highly educated. In my opinion, many of the tree farmers left the conference convinced -- albeit confused -- that environmentalists were evil, unpatriotic, anti-religious, sexual deviates bent on destroying their livelihoods and lifestyles by working through the government to impose unnecessary and harsh regulations.

81 . "The Political Agenda of the 'Wise Use' Movement," p.10.

82 . Ralph Noyes, "Use the ballot box to promote public lands use, economic freedom," *People for the West!*, Volume 7, Number 9 (October 1994): 5.

83 . The Western Environmental Trade Association's membership includes labor unions, business trade associations, major industry and agricultural groups. WETA often opposes traditional environmental groups on land and development issues.

84 . "WETA angered by lobbyist's outburst," *The Daily Inter Lake* (May 20, 1991): A3.

85 . "People for the West blasted by Audubon official," *Livingston Enterprise* (May 18, 1992): A1.

86 . Eric Williams, "Wise-use, hate groups likened," *The Montana Standard* (September 28, 1991): B2.

87 . "PFW! 'Save Our Communities' rally draws hundreds," *People for the West!*, Volume 4, Number 12 (October 1, 1991): 3.

88 . Joe Snyder, "Year in Review: PFW! '95," *People for the West!*, Volume 8, Number 10 (December 1995/January 1996): 3-7.

89 . "People For The West! Demonstrates That Grassroots Organizing Is Succeeding," *The Pick & Shovel* (January 1992): 14.

90 . The Wise Use, or sometimes referred to as the "multiple use" movement has a number of allies among conservative western lawmakers on Capital Hill, many of whom have long been at loggerheads with mainstream environmental groups over natural resource issues. The majority of the movement's political support comes from Republicans in Congress (See Appendix B).

91 . "People For The West! Demonstrates That Grassroots Organizing Is succeeding," *The Pick & Shovel*, p.14.

People for the West!, like Wise Use groups in general, understands the value of negative tactics. They invite unfavorable media coverage of responsible conservation groups' activities, clouding their cause with controversy. They also try to stir up opposition to specific initiatives among local residents. An example is the Kootenai-Lolo Wilderness Accords in 1991, a landmark wilderness agreement hammered out between loggers and environmentalists. The

initiative was highly praised by both sides as a model for future cooperation; that is, until PFW! employed overheated rhetoric to distort the impact of the measure. By turning local residents against the proposal, they were able to sabotage the accords.

92 . Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, "After the Apocalypse," *Wild Forest Review* (December 1994): 10.

93 . Contrary to what "Wise Users" may believe, the majority of Americans do not share the enthusiasm of anti-enviros in repealing and weakening key laws to protect the environment and public health and safety. Indeed, virtually every independent poll conducted in 1995 has indicated an overwhelmingly strong -- and generally bipartisan -- support for environmental statutes and regulations. A November, 1995, Harris poll, for example, found that 86 percent of Americans believe the Environmental Protection Agency is needed as much or more today as when it was founded 25 years ago. Times-Mirror polls conducted in April, and again in September, 1994, found similar results:

- 82 percent want stricter laws to protect the environment
- 67 percent would pay higher prices for environmental protections
- 66 percent believe that environmental protections and economic growth go hand in hand
- 62 percent believe more federal spending should go to the environment
- 60 percent vote for the environment if compromise is possible
- 60 percent say business should pay for resources used on federal lands

In which areas have environmental regulations not gone far enough?

- 76 percent: water pollution
- 66 percent: air pollution
- 54 percent: wild and natural areas
- 52 percent: wetlands
- 51 percent: endangered species

94 . The environmental message, if it is to be inclusive of all Americans, must be moderate and be aimed at the mainstream of society. Progressive environmental groups should distance themselves from the more radical, fringe elements of the movement by publicly denouncing practices that encourage violence or fail to consider the economic ramifications of natural resource policy decisions. Clearly a campaign to eliminate cattle ranching has no practical chance of winning support and will alienate the majority of the public. However, one that calls for sustainable ranching practices is a more rational middle-ground, especially if individual ranchers can rally behind it.

95 . Jim Carrier, "Population boom may prove bane of West's environment," *The Denver Post* (February 7, 1993): B4. The story dealt primarily with remarks made by Tom Power, an economist with the University of Montana. He spoke about his research at an environmental strategy conference in Boulder, Colorado.

96 . Robert Salter, "Environmental Backlash and the Resurgence of Manifest Destiny," *The Workbook*, Volume 17, Number 1 (Spring 1992): 7.

97 . Ibid, p.8.

98 . This claim was attributed to Steven Meyer, an economist at MIT, in a Sierra Club electronic mail "action alert," March 28, 1995.

99 . Wade King, "Protected resources are Montana's future," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* (December 15, 1991): B7.

100 . Anti-environmental groups often sidestep factual issues by claiming that anyone concerned about the environment does not care about people. They label their opponents as "elitist," "preservationist," "socialist," "anti-human," or "pagan." When formulating effective arguments, it is important for environmentalists to avoid inviting Wise Use labels by using language or rhetoric that may seem insensitive to rural western culture and local needs. Framing arguments in economic terms may help to direct attention away from individuals or groups, and demonstrates a sincere understanding of many people's primary concerns. If, however, ugly labels or scare tactics persist, environmentalists should confront Wise Use intimidation immediately and directly by asserting the facts of the issue clearly and consistently. Eventually, the public may begin to hear -- and believe -- what environmentalists are saying.

101 . Much of the needed information can be acquired from news articles, the groups' own newsletters, by attending their meetings and events, and from knowledgeable environmentalists and organizations. It is worthwhile to ask for a group's board of directors and a breakdown of its spending. An annual report is useful in finding out more about a group's goals and philosophy. Or contact the National Charities Information Bureau (Dept. 160, 19 Union Square, W., NY, NY 10003). Federal tax forms (990s), state incorporation documents, and charitable organization documents can also be used to ascertain relationships between groups and their funding sources. All of this information can be used tactically to expose the nature of the movement and to dispel Wise Use myths.

102 . Schlesinger made these comments during a commencement speech at St. Louis University, May 1995.

103 . Personal stories can be very effective in communicating an environmental message to the public. Examples include: a timber town faces economic demise as the result of a company's decision to export raw logs to foreign countries; a foreign corporation exploits weak laws to mine for gold and then leaves poisoned streams for area residents, and an expensive environmental clean-up for taxpayers; or a grazing permit prevents recreational access on public land once open to multiple use management.

104 . "Pope: Bible teaches gentle use of nature," *Missoulian* (March 26, 1996): A6.

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